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LETTERS

TO A

YOUNG GENTLEMAN,

On his setting out for

FRANCE:

CONTAINING A

SURVEY OF PARIS,

AND A

REVIEW OF FRENCH LITERATURE;

WITH

RULES and DIRECTIONS for TRAVELLERS,

AND

Various OBSERVATIONS and ANECDOTES relating to the Subject.

By JOHN ANDREWS, L.L.D.

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LETTERS

TO A

YOUNG GENTLEMAN

ON

His ſetting out for FRANCE.

LETTER I.

YOU are now arrived at the proper age for travelling. Until we are five-and-twenty, little or no benefit reſults to the far greater part of thoſe who make what is called the grand tour. Nature has given to few men ſuch talents as will enable them to travel at an earlier period. A Bacon, a Wotton, and a few others, are exceptions which will not juſtify the ſending abroad mere youths, unacquainted with their own country, and totally unfit

therefore to draw thoſe compariſons between it and others, which are the very intent of travelling.

France is doubtleſs the country which, next to their own, it behoves Engliſhmen to be beſt acquainted with. This knowledge is now become more indiſpenſible than ever. The immenſe alterations that have taken place in the circumſtances of the Britiſh nation, render it a duty of the firſt magnitude for every Engliſh gentleman, whoſe line of life intitles him to viſit foreign parts.

It is much to be regretted, that the majority of our travellers run over to France from no other motives than thoſe which lead them to Bath, Tunbridge, or Scarborough. Amuſement and diſſipation are their principal, and often their only views.

Happily you are not of that number. Inſtruction and laudable curioſity, are the incentives that influence your wiſhes to ſee France.

France. In ſuch a light you are highly commendable; the more indeed, as you did not embrace this determination, until you had duly ſeaſoned your mind for ſuch an undertaking, by ſtudying the language of that country, and by obtaining a previous inſight of as many things relating to it, as reading and converſation could procure.

The want of ſuch a neceſſary preparation is too common among our young gentlemen; and is the real cauſe why moſt of them return from their travels, ſo remarkably unimproved in what is principally worth attaining, the ſcience of the government, political circumſtances, hiſtory, and literature of the nations they have viſited.

How many perſons not deficient in underſtanding, after ſpending two or three years abroad, bring little elſe home with them, than the remembrance of the gaie-

ties in which their rank and fortune have enabled them to participate, and the names of thoſe from whom they have received notice and civilities?

The mere frequentation of what is called the *beau monde*, will never repay the expences which the ſyſtem of travelling eſtabliſhed in England, entails on ſuch a number of genteel families. There is no need to go out of our own country to learn politeneſs and engaging manners. Many judicious foreigners prefer ours to the French, as more manly and becoming. The reaſon why I have mentioned the French, is that moſt of our travellers make them a particular object of imitation.

The chief end of travelling is to improve one ſelf in the knowledge of what cannot be learned otherwiſe. Such as the actual ideas, manners, morals, and ſtate of countries, and nations. The information we receive concern-

concerning theſe matters, from books and the company of intelligent individuals, is highly to be valued; but we ſhall certainly be far better able to judge of them from ocular inſpection and perſonal experience.

Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aures,
Quam quæ ſunt oculis Subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
Ipſe ſibi tradit Spectator.

For this reaſon, ſuch as poſſeſs the means of gratifying their curioſity, and are at the ſame time deſtined or liable from their birth to arrive at eminent ſtations, ſhould not fail to dedicate a reaſonable portion of their time to the viſitation of foreign parts.

I have united the probability of acting in a public ſphere to the poſſeſſion of fortune, from a conviction that the latter alone confers no right to ramble over the world, unleſs it is in queſt of health, or from the neceſſity of buſineſs. Pleaſure is

a motive which ought to be diſcarded; enough may be found at home; and it is ſhameful to hear men aſſign it as a reaſon for ſquandering ſo much money, and loſing ſo much time beyond ſea, both which they might employ to ſo much better purpoſes, without ſtirring out of their own country.

LETTER II.

HAVING from various cauſes had frequent occaſion to reſide among the French, I will endeavour to make you ſhare my acquaintance with them. This I propoſe doing in a ſummary, compendious manner; ſuch as may, without loading your memory with unneceſſary details, be ſufficiently copious to remind you of what is worth knowing and retaining concerning that country and people.

The hiſtorical and geographical deſcriptions of France, do not make any part of the

the ſubject here intended to be laid before you. You are well acquainted with both. It is the now exiſting and acting principles, manners, and genius of that nation, with which you are to become acquainted.

The termination of the fatal quarrel with America, will in all probability open a new ſcene to the Engliſh who viſit France.

Before the loſs of our colonies, the French looked upon us as dangerous neighbours. They viewed us with an hoſtile and ſuſpicious eye: their friendlineſs and eſteem, for we always met with both, were accompanied with the idea of the many future miſchiefs they expected from us.

Though to ſome this may appear groundleſs refinement, yet I will venture to appeal to thoſe who have been converſant with the ſerious and thinking among them, for the truth of the obſervation.

But now that the danger is ſo much leſſened, and that their apprehenſions are of courſe ſo much removed, it is not improbable, that entertaining no immediate dread of our power, they will feel the leſs repugnance to beſtow their good-will and amity upon the natives of this country.

One of the firſt rules I would have you diligently obſerve, is to ſhew a willingneſs to be pleaſed with their endeavours to pleaſe you, and to ſeize every occaſion of doing juſtice to their many agreeable qualities.

One of the complaints urged againſt the Engliſh by the French, and indeed by moſt foreigners, is a ſupercilioufneſs of diſpoſition that inclines them to undervalue whatever they meet with abroad. More enmity has accrued to us from this than from any other cauſe. You cannot therefore be too much upon your guard againſt ſo prejudicial a failing. Acknowledge readily

readily what is good every where, diſſemble ſmall inconveniences, and take in good part all that is meant as ſuch: this I have conſtantly found the ſureſt method of conciliating affection and eſteem, from perſons of all characters and ſtations.

The French are peculiarly delighted with the praiſes which an Engliſhman beſtows on their country: it would be very imprudent to refuſe paying ſo moderate a price for the many civilities it will purchaſe.

As the late war has ended to their advantage, though not in the leaſt to our diſhonour, you will find them, on that very account, the more willing to accept of any compliments which you may occaſionally think proper to pay them: winners are always in good humour; and little gains ſuffice to excite that of the French; though, to ſpeak truth, they have in the preſent inſtance ample reaſons to be ſatisfied.

As

As ſoon as you are landed on French ground, renew the reſolution I have often heard you make, of loſing no opportunity of converſing with the natives in their own language, and upon ſubjects which relate to them.

You will find them ſurpriſingly communicative and affable. They are peculiarly deſirous of gratifying the curioſity of ſtrangers, eſpecially of the Engliſh, whoſe good opinion they are always earneſt to obtain. I ſpeak of the genteeler claſſes.

The common fault of our countrymen abroad, is to aſſociate too much with each other, and too little with the people of the country they are in. This is an unaccountable turn in perſons of underſtanding. To what intent did they go abroad? or, to aſk the right queſtion, had they any other than to ſeek out ſome new method of killing time, and relieving themſelves from the burden of idleneſs through novelty of amuſements?

LETTER III.

THE journey from Calais to Paris, will, on comparing it with that from London to Dover, furniſh you with abundance of ſubjects for reflection. The reſpective aſpect of each country, the appearance of the inhabitants, their looks, their attire, their habitations, all will afford a ſenſible Engliſhman powerful reaſons for thanking Providence that he is one, as the philoſopher did of old for being a Grecian.

As you approach Paris, you will ſee no cauſe to alter your ſentiments. *Splendide Mendax* was the idea that always ſtruck me, whenever I beheld rich cloaths or fine buildings on that route, as they are ſo ſtrongly counter-balanced by the wretchedneſs of multitudes.

But

But let us enter that metropolis, which you deſign to make your abode, and the centre of your ſpeculations.

The entrance into Paris is no ways prepoſſeſſing in its favour. Poverty and narrowneſs of circumſtances ſoon meet an experienced eye. Notwithſtanding the partial appearances of ſplendour that here and there preſent themſelves, it is eaſy to perceive the general deficiency of plenty and proſperity.

The dwellings of the inferior ſort are poor and uncomfortable; the ſhops are mean, and ſeem to want employment.

On the other hand, you will be ſtruck with the grandeur of the public buildings, the churches, monaſteries, and houſes of the great.

But it is only in their outſide they exceed the ſtructures of the ſame kind in Eng-

England, churches excepted, which are uſually larger, and more magnificent than ours; the conveniences within doors are not to be compared with thoſe of Engliſh houſes.

Theſe and various other remarks of the ſame nature I will leave you to make at your leiſure. Of ſuch objects I would wiſh you to be very carefully ſollicitous.

My preſent aim is to lead you to the contemplation of theſe as well as of higher matters. They ſhould affect deeply the minds of attentive people, as they relate ſo eſſentially to the immediate and ſolid well-being of the community.

Well do I know that the generality of travellers ſeldom think it their buſineſs to ſtoop to ſuch concerns as theſe. Palaces, gardens, ſtatues, pictures, antiquities, and productions of art, are the principal ſubjects of their curioſity: the others are merely

merely collateral, and noticed only *en paſſant*, in a light and tranſient manner.

It is this frivolous turn of mind that renders ſo many books of travels totally unworthy of the peruſal of ſerious people; who ſeek to inſtruct much more than to amuſe themſelves. But even in the light of mere amuſement, it requires, one ſhould think, no ſmall ſhare of patience, to wade through ſo many pages of deſcriptions of paintings and ſculptures; which can be of no uſe but to refreſh the memory of thoſe who have ſeen them, and are at the ſame time tolerable connoiſſeurs of their merit. To all other claſſes of readers they muſt certainly prove very inſipid.

A man who travels with views of ſubſtantial improvement, will rank ſuch things in the ſecondary claſs of his obſervations. They will ſerve as amuſements, but by no means as the principal objects of his inquiry.

I thought

I thought it neceſſary to warn you againſt that rabies of admiration for ſtatues and pictures, which is ſo commonly but a bare affectation. There are few real judges of them: for one that is truly qualified for ſuch a taſk, there are crouds of pretenders. I could mention a variety of proofs how often the ignorance of ſuch perſons is ridiculed by artiſts. Theſe are uſually too polite to offend gentlemen, and it may be added, too wiſe to diſoblige cuſtomers. From ſuch motives many a man paſſes for a judge, who is very ill qualified for one.

There are ſo many other objects to employ your attention, and in which a man of ſound underſtanding cannot be deceived, that I would always wiſh you to give the preference to theſe, and conſider them as the chief ſources of the benefit you are to derive from your travels.

LETTER IV.

FROM the warmth with which I have reprobated the frivolous purſuits of the plurality of our travellers, I would not have you conclude that I am an enemy to elegant arts and amuſements. I intend no more than to ſet them in their right place, by prevailing upon you to view them in a light far inferior to the knowledge of thoſe things on which the grandeur and proſperity of nations are founded, or of thoſe which are the cauſes of their detriment and ruin.

It is reported of the famous Locke, that he was ſo diligent in prying continually into the various callings and occupations of individuals, that he poſſeſſed a complete theory of all the principal branches of mechanical buſineſs; and could readily con-

converſe with tradeſmen of almoſt every denomination, on the moſt intricate parts of their profeſſion, and point out errors and improvements, of which they were not aware themſelves.

It is not neceſſary that every gentleman ſhould be as intelligent in theſe matters as Mr. Locke; but it is highly requiſite that ſuch as travel on the ſcore of ſubſtantial improvement, ſhould bring home with them, as much of foreign knowledge and experience in uſeful things, as is conſiſtent with the line of life which they purpoſe to embrace. This would conduce to juſtify the expence this nation is at in the vaſt ſums yearly laid out in tours to the continent of Europe.

Foreigners that travel, ſet us the example in this particular. Within theſe twenty years numbers of them have viſited our iſland, prompted by views of deriving beneficial lights to their country,

from the various inſtitutions and eſtabliſh-ments that have latterly rendered the Britiſh nation ſo renowned.

The truth is, that foreigners have much more rational purpoſes to ſerve by coming amongſt us, than we have by going among them. Utility is generally their aim; ours is ſeldom any other than pleaſure.

When you have ſeriouſly pondered on the perniciouſneſs of travelling for ſo paultry an end, I promiſe myſelf from your good ſenſe, and the pains you have taken to qualify yourſelf to appear abroad with credit, that you will not deſerve to be counted among thoſe who are continually impreſſing foreigners with diſadvantageous opinions of the natives of England.

I remember to have heard a Swiſs gentleman of excellent capacity remark, that moſt of our Engliſh travellers were ſent abroad much too young and inexperienced

in

in the affairs of their country. Without a competent knowledge of which, he was poſitive in his conviction, that travelling became no better than a mere amuſement. No man, till he had attained his four or five-and-twentieth year, was fit to judge with ſolidity concerning the tranſactions and buſineſs of his own country, much leſs of another, to which he was an utter ſtranger.

The only reaſonable expectation to be formed in regard to a travelling youth, was the acquiſition of foreign languages. Were it not to this intent, he would often ſay, that no people could betray more thoughtleſſneſs and imprudence than the Engliſh, in ſuffering, or rather indeed encouraging their young gentlemen to make ſuch long and expenſive excurſions.

Among other miſtakes and negligences, of which Engliſh parents were guilty, he greatly blamed them for not endeavour-

ing to train their children to ſome ſhare of military knowledge: a campaign, was it no more, he thought abſolutely requiſite to perfect the character of a young man of rank and fortune.

He did not mean by this to turn our nobility and gentry into military men; but to infuſe into them a manly ſpirit, and wean them from habits of indolence and effeminacy.

In this he aſſerted that he ſpoke from experience, and that he had always found in well-diſpoſed young men, a wonderful aptitude to receive much profit by adopting ſuch a plan. He mentioned ſeveral whoſe talents and diſpoſitions had been improved, to the ſurprize of all that knew them.

Certain it is that a due portion of martialiſm elevates the ſoul in a remarkable degree. We never had a more reſpectable body of nobles and gentlemen in England

than in the reigns of Elizabeth and Charles the Firſt. Their education and their valour were both equally conſpicuous, and has never been rivalled ſince.

In France, during the reigns of Lewis the thirteenth, and of his ſon Lewis the fourteenth, the French nobility were remarkably converſant both in arms and literature.

If we turn to Greek and Roman antiquity, we find all the principal perſonages of each of thoſe celebrated nations, not leſs renowned for their courage and talents in war, than for their ſkill in polite knowledge.

I do not think it neceſſary to give you a catalogue of names by way of proof: you are ſufficiently acquainted with the truth of what is aſſerted; and it were a ſhame that any gentleman of your age ſhould require his memory to be refreſhed on ſuch an occaſion.

Whether your friends will coincide with the opinion of this Swiſs gentleman, is not the point in queſtion; but one need not aſk their permiſſion to be convinced, that a young gentleman who has remained abroad three or four years, and has neglected opportunities to acquaint himſelf in ſome meaſure with ſo neceſſary a duty as that of ſerving his country in time of need, is undoubtedly guilty of great indolence and remiſſneſs.

It is highly probable that in a ſhort time diſputes will ariſe in ſome parts of Europe. Thither I think it incumbent on a young gentleman of ſpirit to repair. Of the two parties, let him join that which is the moſt friendly to Britain, and ſacrifice at leaſt a twelvemonth to the ſtudy of war.

Poſſibly an advice of this kind may not coincide with the ideas of many of our gentry. When people ramble abroad from

mere curioſity, and the deſire of varying their paſtimes, ſuch counſel is not acceptable; but hoping that you are determined to diſtinguiſh yourſelf from the bulk of our travellers, I have ventured to addreſs you as a young man of ſenſe and reſolution, as one that means to travel in that character, and laying aſide the frivolous occupations that have ſo long diſgraced them, to impreſs foreigners with a new ſet of ideas in regard to the young gentlemen of England.

Hitherto, *riche comme un Anglois*, as rich as an Engliſhman, has been the compliment uſually paid to our countrymen. It were to be wiſhed that an epithet of a more honourable tendency could be ſubſtituted in its room. To be known chiefly by that, is almoſt to deſerve no other.

LETTER V.

AFTER laying before you the foregoing general ideas, I will now endeavour to deſcend into ſuch particulars as may render your journey of real advantage, and make it the foundation of much future enjoyment and utility.

As you propoſe remaining two complete years among the French, I think that in order to employ that time beneficially, you ſhould begin by drawing up a plan of the manner in which you intend to fill it, and ſuffer no unneceſſary avocations to interrupt it.

The great cauſe of ſo much time being idled away both at home as well as abroad, is that people are not ſollicitous to make a previous diſtribution of it according to pro-

probable occurrences. An orderly mind is the foundation of all intellectual acquirements. Through regularity, the moſt immenſe and weighty buſineſs may be diſpatched with celerity and eaſe; but every thing is too much for people who act without any rule.

I need not repeat the well-known ſtory of Dewit, who was no leſs a prodigy from the talents he diſplayed in the management of public affairs, than from the aſtoniſhing facility and diligence with which they paſſed through his hands, owing entirely to the judicious arrangement of his time.

In imitation of ſo illuſtrious a precedent, let every hour have its particular aſſignment, and adhere to it punctually.

I pretend not to dictate what employments are moſt ſuited to the different parts of the day. I have obſerved that the

the notions and diſpoſitions even of ſenſible perſons do not always concur in this matter.

I have known ſome who began the day by reading or ſtudying, others by writing and compoſing, reſerving the other for the evening. But though ſuch a method may be as advantageous as any to individuals who reſide at home, and are maſters of their own time, yet to a young gentleman abroad I imagine the morning alone ſhould be ſacred to the muſes, and that he ſhould conſtantly dedicate the after part of the day to ſociety, from which he is to reap his principal improvement.

Without preſcribing any particular method of dividing your time, I ſhall only adviſe you to be faithful to the diviſion which you may think proper to make; and to be perſuaded that unleſs one is made, time will inſenſibly ſteal away, without leaving any other remembrance than of its loſs.

LETTER VI.

WE are told that the proper ſtudy of mankind is man; to which let me add, that the proper ſtudy of a traveller is the country and people he viſits.

It was judiciouſly done to carry over but a few Engliſh books with you: when I ſee large quantities cheſted up by our young travellers, unleſs it is with an intent to make preſents of them, I am always inclined to ſuſpect that either they mean them as a parade, or poſſibly to give them that reading abroad which they have neglected at home.

But let them not be deceived by fruitleſs expectations. He that has not read the good writers in his own language, before he left his country, is ill calculated to go abroad in the character of a gentleman; and cannot promiſe himſelf

himſelf much benefit from the literature of other countries.

To know little of one's own countrymen in that province, is an inſuperable bar to improvement by the writers in other nations. It is too late to begin an application to one's own language, when the time is come for applying to that of others. If previous to travelling, a man could or would not perform one only of theſe taſks, it is hardly to be expected that while on his travels, he will either be able or willing to go through the fatigue of both.

No gentleman ſhould, in ſhort, venture himſelf abroad as a traveller, before he has laid in a ſufficient ſtock of liberal knowledge, that of his own language eſpecially, together with a reaſonable tincture of thoſe with which he will have occaſion to form a more extenſive acquaintance.

French and Latin are indiſpenſibly requiſite in a young man who propoſes to mix,

mix in elegant and reſpectable companies. While you are not deficient in theſe, you need not apprehend being undervalued; but without them, the ſecond eſpecially, I have frequently remarked, that the French are inclined to ſuſpect one of being *un nouveau parvenu*, a lucky fellow of mean birth and breeding.

If Latin is neceſſary to preſerve you from theſe ſuſpicions, French is no leſs wanted to enable you to join company and converſation, and to render you acceptable in both.

Deficiency in this reſpect, though not ſo diſgraceful as the former, is more inconvenient. The French have ſo long been uſed to look upon their language as the medium of genteel communication, that they learn no other, and expect that every perſon who forms pretenſions to polite breeding, ſhould ſpeak it.

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As you know enough of it to be at no loſs upon any occaſion, I congratulate you on the ſatisfaction you will receive from that circumſtance. It is no trivial one in any country; but eſpecially in one where the natives are ſeldom able to converſe in any other.

To this let me add, that the French are charmed to hear a foreigner expreſs himſelf with eaſe and correctneſs in their language. They look upon it as a tacit homage paid to the ſuperiority of its merit, and at the ſame time as a proof of the taſte of him that poſſeſſes it.

It is, in ſhort, an accompliſhment of eſſential weight with people of all characters in France, and for which they are willing to allow one very ample credit.

Next to Latin and French, let me recommend the intelligence of the Italian, for two reaſons, firſt, becauſe it is attained with

with facility by one that knows the two former, and ſecondly, as it is not improbable that you may be ſmitten ſome day or other, with a deſire of ſeeing Italy.

To theſe two reaſons one may add a third, the excellent authors in that language, and the number of Italians that repair to England.

A complete knowledge and ſkill in theſe three languages, will abundantly ſuffice, together with your own, to furniſh you with copious means of information in all the divers branches of learning.

If you have not forgot your Greek, cultivate it with all care and diligence; but if you have, or never ſhould have made much proficiency therein, I do not ſee of what ſervice an application to it would prove at preſent. When turned of five-and-twenty, languages are but an inſipid occupation to a ſolid, thinking mind. Unleſs they are learned

learned in early youth, nothing but abſolute neceſſity can juſtify a man's labours in ſo rugged and tedious a taſk.

Beſide the fatigue that accompanies them, they cannot fail to preclude our attention to matters of far greater moment. What are they after all, but mere combinations of letters and ſounds, different in one country from what they are in another, but expreſſive of the ſame thing, and productive of no idea that is not to be found in one as much as in all?

It has frequently raiſed my indignation, to ſee men profoundly ſkilled in the learned languages, totally unconverſant in other knowledge. This is by no means an uncommon caſe. One would be tempted to imagine, that perſons of this ſtamp had little or no turn for any thing elſe; which is perhaps too often the real fact.

I once knew a profeſſor in a foreign univerſity preciſely in this predicament. He

He had a ſingular facility in the attaining of languages; but was a ſtranger to ancient or modern hiſtory, and almoſt to every other branch of knowledge. His fort lay entirely in his expertneſs as a linguiſt: he underſtood critically the meaning of words; but did not ſeem to reliſh the ſpirit and ſublimity of the expreſſions of which he ſo well comprehended the ſenſe. Whether he read Heſiod or Homer, Virgil or Silius, I apprehend his raptures were equal. Thoſe who knew him were convinced of this, as well as that he held many of the beſt modern poets and other writers in a moſt unjuſt contempt.

This naturally leads me to warn you, to hold an equitable ſcale in thoſe matters; and to conſider that there are many men of excellent taſte and diſcernment, who are unacquainted with, or have forgotten the Greek and Latin which they formerly learned at ſchool; but are on the other

hand very extenſively read in the good writings of their countrymen.

The paſſion for languages is not however much known in France; leſs I believe than in any nation. As they abound in tranſlations, they ſtand in the leſs need of originals, and have the more time to employ on things themſelves.

To do them juſtice, they are uncommonly ready to peruſe the productions of other people, when clad in a French dreſs: it may be ſaid that there is hardly a work of any merit which has not been tranſlated into their language, and has not met with the moſt gracious reception.

They ſeem perſuaded that the time and pains beſtowed upon the learning of languages, will be much more profitably employed in peruſing judicious verſions. Theſe one is ſure to read with facility,

and thoroughly to comprehend; whereas years are neceſſary to arrive at the exact underſtanding of an original. While people therefore are not under an immediate obligation of ſubmitting to ſo much toil, they not improperly ſtile it, *travailler pour l'Amour du Travail*, labouring for the ſake of labour.

You will, conformably to this opinion, find very few Frenchmen fond of other languages than their own: but then you will find excellent tranſlations among them, of almoſt every book worth reading, whether ancient or modern.

One of the moſt celebrated French tranſlators of Greek and Latin, was Monſieur D'Ablancourt: this gentleman was of opinion, that, hiſtory, laws, and ſciences excepted, which were in their nature progreſſive, and muſt of courſe furniſh a continual ſeries of matter for ſtudy and improvement, all other branches of litera-

ture were already ſufficiently inveſtigated; and that whatever the moderns might add of their own, would never attain the excellence of the ancients.

Inſtead of exhauſting themſelves in vain attempts to rival them, he adviſed the literati to content themſelves with the works of preceding ages, and to employ their abilities in tranſlating them faithfully and elegantly for the uſe of the preſent times.

He not only gave, but conformed to this advice with the moſt remarkable punctuality: his whole labours were devoted to the ſervice of thoſe who were unacquainted with the learned languages, and yet were deſirous of benefiting by the excellent things they contained. His verſions are incomparably the beſt extant.

After precautioning you againſt the needleſs ſtudy of languages, let me with

the ſame breath intreat you to neglect none that you are a maſter of.

I will here uſe the freedom of ſetting before you the method uſed by a friend, in order to retain thoſe of which he was poſſeſt.

Thoſe purſuits and ſtudies excepted, which demanded immediate and daily attention, he dedicated every week in rotation to one language excluſively; ſelecting for that purpoſe the beſt authors in each, and avoiding carefully to intermix the leaſt application to any more than one at a time.

By ſuch means, and with little more than an hour's ſpace in the day; he preſerved for years a competency of ſkill in the languages he had been taught in his youth.

You will find, in ſeveral of the coffee-houſes, foreigners of great merit in this particular branch. I knew an Hungarian

gentleman, an officer of Huſſars, who ſpoke moſt of the European languages with ſurpriſing fluency and correctneſs. He was a perſon of thorough education: he wrote and expreſt himſelf in Latin in a maſterly ſtile: I remember an ode of his compoſing to the honour of Voltaire; which connoiſſeurs eſteemed equal in point of latinity to any production of the time. He converſed in, and, what was more remarkable, he pronounced the Engliſh like a native. Pope he knew in a manner by heart, and preferred him to all modern poets, Voltaire excepted, whom he ſtiled the reigning King of Parnaſſus.

This gentleman, to the beſt of my recollection, poſſeſt nine modern languages, the Poliſh, Hungarian, Turkiſh, German, Dutch, Italian, Spaniſh, French, and Engliſh.

I mention him as an inſtance of what may be accompliſhed through a regular courſe

courſe of aſſiduity, even by a man taken up with the buſineſs of the world, and wholly dependent upon his own induſtry for his ſucceſs in life. He was turned of fifty when I knew him; and had experienced ſome trying viciſſitudes, having during his youth been a captive in Turky, and met afterwards with other mortifications.

But in the midſt of difficulties he always found leiſure for improvement. His erudition was of a manly uſeful kind: ancient and modern hiſtory, fortification and tactics, he was allowed to excel in, and in all diſcuſſions of this ſort his opinion was held deciſive.

As nothing however ſhould be undertaken *invita minerva*, I would very ſeriouſly admoniſh you, to beware of being ſeduced, by his example, into ſuch an arduous attempt as that of compaſſing the knowledge of a multiplicity of languages.

An inſtance of ſuch a nature is a phenomenon, exhibited now and then as a proof and ſpecimen of the extent of human powers; but which while we admire, it would be fruitleſs to propoſe as an object of imitation.

Contenting yourſelf therefore with thoſe languages I have already recommended, improve yourſelf in them; and be perſuaded that more utility and credit will reſult from the perfect poſſeſſion of two or three, than from an incomplete and partial knowledge of half a dozen.

The general rule is, that ſuch as are converſant in many, are ſeldom maſters of any. This is an old proverb, and as ſuch deſerves particular attention: as far as my experience goes, it is juſtly founded.

It is principally among illiterate people one meets with the greateſt linguiſts. I have known ſea-faring men at Genoa and Leghorn,

Leghorn, able to converſe readily upon common ſubjects in almoſt every language of Europe.

I hope that you will in this branch of knowledge retain what you have got; but I do not wiſh you to obtain any more.

LETTER VII.

HAVING mentioned in my preceding, the likelihood of meeting in coffee-houſes with foreign gentlemen worthy of notice for their ſkill in languages, I will alſo add, that you will have opportunities of becoming acquainted in thoſe places, with ſome of the moſt ſenſible and knowing individuals in Paris.

In this reſpect the coffee-houſes in that city have the advantage over thoſe of our metropolis. In London no acceſs is permitted

mitted without particular recommendation, to the aſſociations that are formed in coffee-houſes among the gentlemen who frequent them. Theſe excepted, the natural reſerve of the Engliſh allows of little converſation in a coffee-room, unleſs it is upon the buſineſs officially as it were tranſacted there. Thoſe adjoining to the Change, are for that reaſon the only where much talking is heard and ſubmitted to with patience.

But in Paris the leiſure of numbers of the genteeler ſort, being far greater than with individuals of the ſame claſs with us, from that variety of cauſes which it is not here neceſſary to enumerate, the coffee-houſes of credit abound with perſons of merit and ingenuity. Their converſation not being ſo tediouſly ingroſſed by politics or buſineſs as that of our coffee-houſe frequenters, affords a much greater choice of ſubjects for the pleaſure, variety, and animation of diſcourſe.

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As freedom and affability reign conſpicuouſly in the companies that meet in theſe places, ample encouragement is given to diſplay abilities of every ſort. I have been frequently entertained with learned and ingenious, as well as with amuſing ſubjects; and been ſtruck with admiration at the variety of talents exhibited on theſe occaſions.

Theſe places being often the evening rendezvous of perſons noted for their genius and capacity, are upon that account reſorted to by numbers who ſeek for inſtruction or pleaſure. They are both ſo well blended, that one is ſure to miſs of neither.

It is here the nature and diſpoſition of the French is perfectly diſcovered: polite yet warm, impetuous yet affable, full of life and vigour, and no leſs replete with obligingneſs and complacency.

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Characters of all denominations abound here. Provided no ill-natured reflections be caſt on the ruling powers of the ſtate, and upon ſuch matters as plain ſenſe will tell one ſhould not be meddled with, an unbounded freedom is allowed and taken in all things.

Quidquid agunt homines noſtri farrago libelli, the whole circle of human actions comes into diſcuſſion before theſe aſſemblies; and it is impoſſible, conſidering the genius and experience of thoſe from whom the diſſertations proceed, that great utility, as well as enjoyment, ſhould not reſult to the audience.

For theſe reaſons you will, if you are wiſe, often repair to theſe houſes; and lay aſide that pernicious pride, which prompts ſo many of our countrymen abroad to diſdain all company, but that of perſons of the higheſt rank.

But

But let me requeſt it of you, ſeriouſly to reflect, whether ſuch a ſociety is in reality the moſt agreeable, or the moſt inſtructive.

More honour indeed accrues from an introduction to it, and a greater facility of admiſſion elſewhere; but is it of ſuch company the moſt brilliant and moſt meritorious characters were ever known to form the principal part?

People of very high rank are, with few exceptions, the moſt inſipid, and unacquainted with the world, and generally the moſt ignorant and uneducated. Were it not for the ſplendour that accompanies great riches, perſons born and bred to vaſt opulence, would poſſeſs but little attraction. The ſecret expectation of deriving emolument from their frequentation, is the chief motive that ſurrounds them with followers and adherents. Few are there among them whoſe acquired qualifications deſerve much

much notice or reſpect. If they are bleſt with a good character, 'tis in general purely the gift of nature, unaſſiſted by art or culture. A proof of this is, that rarely do we ſee a ſuperſtructure raiſed on their native good qualities; as if thoſe to whom they had been intruſted, were afraid they ſhould be inveſted with any other ſuperiority than that with which they were born.

So far as intereſt is concerned, it would be imprudent to neglect them; but if you ſeek for improvement, it is not there you will find it.

The chief, and indeed the propereſt motive pleaded for courting the preſence of the great, is that it brings us acquainted with ſuch perſons of merit and reputation as frequent it from ſimilar views: as to the principals themſelves, they may be conſidered rather as the conveners, than as the authors and promoters of brilliant ſociety.

ſociety. I have ſaid nothing, I believe, that is not in general tolerably true.

From the vivacity of your mind, I make no doubt you will embrace all opportunities of ſtoring it with every kind of improvement. It is only by aſſociating promiſcuouſly with perſons of all profeſſions, that we can become acquainted with the reality of things. While a man therefore bears an unſullied character, think him not unworthy of your ſociety; and if his ſtation is genteel, though his circumſtances ſhould be unequal to his worth, let this alone have weight in your eſtimation; and make as much of it your own as you can by frequenting him, and participating the knowledge and experience he is willing to communicate.

The acquiſitions made in this manner, are, next to thoſe that are obtained through our own perſonal exertions, incomparably ſuperior to thoſe that ariſe from reading

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and ſtudy. Men of abilities, arrived at a certain time of life, are wonderfully pleaſed with docility in their juniors, and always repay it by the juſtneſs and ſolidity of their inſtructions: as they are drawn from their own ſtock, they are built on practice, and may be relied upon. Happy will you be, if among the various individuals, whom accident may throw in your way, you chance to form a connection with one of this deſcription. Should you be ſo fortunate as to meet with ſuch a prize, I moſt ardently pray, firſt that you may be ſenſible of its value, next that you may feel an earneſt deſire to improve ſo auſpicious an opportunity, and laſtly, that no impatience or petulance on your ſide may deprive you of the benefits of ſuch an acquaintance.

It is in the company of ſuch men, that young gentlemen will form themſelves, in a ſhort time, without expence, and at no riſk. Theſe are three conſiderations that ought

ought powerfully to weigh with them, when they recollect how often years are ſpent, money laviſhed, and frequent difficulties and dangers incurred by others, without obtaining an adequate recompence for the toil they have undergone.

I would wiſh you therefore to view ſuch a ſort of acquaintance as a real prize in the lottery of life. They are not ſo rare to be found as may be imagined. Unhappily there are many who find them as the cock did the diamond on the dunghill: not knowing their worth, they turn aſide in queſt of characters more in uniſon with their own.

Were it not for this want of perception in ſuch numbers of our young men of fortune, that part of their education which is by far the moſt important, the finiſhing part, would not uſually be ſo miſerably defective.

Freſh from the univerſity, they are uſhered into ſociety, with the notion, that the knowledge they have acquired of the learned languages, and of the ſciences, is the beſt and ſureſt foundation of future improvement.

Abſtractedly ſpeaking, this notion is juſt and well founded. But then they ſhould be apprized, that unleſs an expert conductor is provided to take them by the hand, experimentally converſant in the various ſcenes of life, and able to give them practical explanations of the precepts they have been taught, unleſs the theories, to which they have ſo long applied, are not illuſtrated by the inſtruction and example of real men of the world, they will remain ignorant in the midſt of imaginary knowledge.

You have yourſelf oftentimes expreſt your aſtoniſhment at the profound inexperience, in a variety of reſpects, of gentle-

men of rank, fortune, and even underſtanding. To what elſe think you could this be owing, than to the miſſing of that neceſſary requiſite to men of their deſcription, a perſon of capacity and expertneſs to attend their firſt progreſs, and initiate them in thoſe purſuits and occupations that become their ſtation in life?

Innocence of heart, integrity of morals, learning and genius are with reaſon deemed eſſentials in a tutor. To a gentleman that propoſes *fallentis ſemita vitæ*, to paſs his life in the ſhade, ſuch a one may be ſufficient. But it is ridiculous to ſeek for no other guide in favour of thoſe who are deſtined to figure in the perplexed circles of worldly tranſactions and public affairs.

Intelligent foreigners are not a little ſurpriſed, when they behold our young gentlemen ſent abroad in the company of perſons doubtleſs of good character, but not unfrequently as new to the ſcenes they

experience, as the very pupils intruſted to their care. I will make no comment upon ſuch a text.

I have always been convinced, in conformity to the perſuaſion of the ableſt men whom I have heard diſcourſe upon this ſubject, that a travelling companion is far preferable to a travelling tutor.

The diſparity of age, added to the idea of controul, muſt neceſſarily leſſen that confidence and cordiality which ought to ſubſiſt between fellow-travellers. When the difference of years is not material, and they are both on a footing in point of authority, friendſhip is much leſs liable to interruption, as prudence is the only director they will have to obey.

But then I am ſuppoſing they are both young men of ſenſe, diſcretion, and maturity. And are any others fit to travel? I alſo ſuppoſe that one of the two has al-

ready been abroad, and that friendſhip induces him to accompany the other.

Whenever the ſyſtem of travelling undergoes a reformation of this kind, I make no doubt this nation will ſoon perceive the difference between ſo beneficial an alteration, and the preſent mode of diſpatching raw young lads abroad, to no other purpoſe than to ſee the raree ſhews upon the continent, and initiate themſelves in foreign levities.

I will conclude this epiſtle by repeating what cannot be too much inculcated, that until the age of four or five-and-twenty, travelling is of little benefit. To travel with any reaſonable hopes of improvement, the mind ſhould be formed; which it cannot be, at leaſt ſeldom is, before that period.

It may be added with equal truth, that unleſs we are accompanied by an experi-

enced friend, previouſly acquainted with foreign parts, we ſhall ſee them only by halves, and loſe of courſe much time, money, and trouble, where they might otherwiſe have been uſefully employed.

LETTER VIII.

WHEREVER curioſity, and the deſire of information leads you, always keep thoſe in your eye, in whom you perceive an aptitude and inclination to gratify your wiſhes. Shew them all deference and attention; and be aſſured that, next to charitableneſs and generoſity, there are no characters in the world more deſerving of reſpect and gratitude, than of ſuch individuals as are willing to inſtruct and edify others at free coſt.

France to its credit abounds with ſuch characters. The French are in general extremely communicative. This renders people

people of knowledge and capacity among them, peculiarly agreeable to foreigners.

There are two claſſes of men in that country, that yield not the palm of ſubſtantial merit to any other denomination of men upon earth. Theſe are the Officers, and the Abbees.

Theſe two bodies contain a multitude of individuals of great worth and abilities. Abbees in particular are diſtinguiſhed by their wit, learning, and genius. The Officers by their experience and knowledge of the world, and the agreeableneſs of their manners and converſation.

Among theſe two claſſes endeavour to ſelect ſome of your moſt familiar acquaintance. The good humour and affability for which the French gentlemen are noted, will make it no difficult taſk. As they have uſually, the Officers eſpeci-

cially, much leiſure upon their hands, they will readily ſpare you as much as you can want.

It is not however among the younger part of either of theſe claſſes, that I would counſel you to ſeek for a connection. Until a Frenchman approaches forty, his extreme vivacity is unacceptable to the temper of an Engliſhman. But nothing can exceed the amiableneſs of a French gentleman of ſenſe and education, *Cujus octavum trepidavit ætas claudere luſtrum*, when he has attained the above mentioned period of life.

His mind and body retain their full vigour: but then the fire and impetuoſity of youth are ſpent; and the experience which years have acquired, has taught him to command his paſſions. The chearfulneſs of his diſpoſition is left at full play, and is no longer ſubject to interruption

ruption from the warmth and unruliness that characterise the generality of young Frenchmen.

A circumstance attends the connections formed with most of these gentlemen, which in the scale of prudence will have considerable weight. As they are not commonly in affluent situations, they are usually persons of oeconomy in pecuniary matters.

I entertain not the least doubt that this circumstance may, in no small degree, have contributed to render them unfit company for many of our young travellers; who seem much more intent on making a parade of their opulence, than on using it as the means of improvement.

I was, at an early period of life, intimately acquainted with an old gentleman of excellent parts, and great good humour; who had, according to his own account,

led

led a moſt pleaſant and agreeable life, and partaken of every enjoyment that a reaſonable man could deſire.

Among the various methods he had uſed to procure himſelf ſo much felicity, the liberality and friendlineſs of his temper had afforded him the moſt effectual.

He was an Iriſh gentleman of ſmall fortune from his father's ſide, but his mother had a brother at Liſbon, who in the courſe of years raiſed an immenſe fortune by trade; which, having no children, he left to her, and ſhe to her ſon.

He was at this time about thirty years of age. Having received an elegant education, and being of a lively facetious diſpoſition, he met with an eaſy reception in the beſt companies, and ſoon became a favourite every where.

But the ſuperiority of his underſtanding weaned him in a ſhort time from that kind of

of ſociety, which has no other merit than being compoſed of perſons in genteel circumſtances. This was not ſufficient for a man who ſought ardently for improvement, and was above ſacrificing it to mere amuſement.

Reſolving to gratify his inclinations without reſerve, he left England, where he had lived from his childhood, and went over to Paris, at the time the famous Miſſiſſippi ſcheme was in agitation, and had ſet ſo many heads to work in that kingdom.

His motive for quitting England was to make the tour of Europe, and to introduce himſelf to the acquaintance of people of conſpicuous merit in all countries.

He viſited accordingly the principal capitals in Europe; but ſoon returned to Paris; where, for particular reaſons, he choſe to fix his reſidence.

On

On his firſt arrival there, he had contracted an intimacy with a French officer of rank; whom, on his return, he found almoſt ruined by ſpeculating in the ſcheme above-mentioned.

As the friendſhip he profeſt for this gentleman was ſolid and ſincere, he aſſiſted him in his diſtreſs, and enabled him ſo far to ſtand his ground, as to preſerve his regiment, which he had been on the point of ſelling in order to pay his debts.

The gratitude of this gentleman made him ample returns. He procured him a numerous ſet of uſeful acquaintance: he repreſented him every where in the moſt advantageous colours: he became his confident and adviſer on ſome arduous and critical occaſions: and on ſucceeding to a large eſtate, and having no iſſue, he annually expended conſiderable ſums in deference to, and conjunction with, his friend, in providing for young gentlemen of good family, but narrow means.

In

In the mean time, as they were both perſons of the very gayeſt frame of mind, they ſpent their lives in a continual round of merriment: but the baſis of it was elegance and refinement. It was, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, an alliance between Epicurus, Anacreon, and Plato.

Thoſe whom they admitted to their company and paſtimes, were choſen for their merit alone, independently of every other conſideration. Their ſociety conſiſted of none but men of prime rate abilities in every department of ſcience and genius, or of the moſt conſummate experience in the various affairs and profeſſions of genteel life.

As individuals of this deſcription are not always treated by fortune according to their deſerts, the notice they took of ſuch as were in this predicament went much further than bare hoſpitality. Both the gentlemen were equally ready to embrace every

every occaſion of acting a friendly part, and of convincing their worthy gueſts, that they viewed them in a far more affectionate light than that of mere conviviality.

In this generous manner did they expend their revenue. Their houſes were the conſtant reſort of individuals of worth. They ſought, they courted, they befriended them. Many a brave officer in diſtreſs, many an ingenious perſon under preſſures, experienced their kindneſs, and through their countenance were brought forward, and placed in a way of proſpering.

Notwithſtanding the numerous deeds of munificence in which they were both daily employed, no men could ever more meritoriouſly claim the title of modeſt and diſintereſted. *Prodeſſe quam conſpici* was the unvariable maxim of their lives. Had it not been for their hoſpitable manner of living, and the gratitude of thoſe who were bene-

benefited by their liberality, the worthineſs of their character muſt have remained concealed; ſo truly averſe they both were to all manner of oſtentation.

I have laid this example before you, to induce you as much as poſſible, to caſt off that ſullenneſs of pride, which too much characteriſes our wealthy countrymen both at home and abroad.

You cannot be too intimately convinced of the irreparable injury done to ſociety in general by this abſurd moroſeneſs. It keeps at an unfortunate diſtance people whoſe mutual wants ſhould be a continual motive of approximation. It perpetuates ignorance and preſumption in the great, by preventing them from aſſociating with thoſe who might have effected a cure. It is the principal obſtruction in the road of proſperity, to thoſe who by their education and parts deſerve to proſper. It tends in ſhort to render inimical to each other,

thoſe

thoſe individuals among whom a good correſpondence ought principally to ſubſiſt, the opulent on the one hand, and people of ingenuity on the other.

It is only by mixing freely with theſe latter that the former can ever hope to command the reſpect of the public. Men of fortune that ſlight perſons of worth, who are not in affluence, ſeldom fail to repent it. Theſe have a variety of ways of exerciſing a juſt, and at the ſame time a liberal revenge.

The world knows too well the neceſſity of union and cordiality between men of rank and thoſe of genius, not to unite in condemning with the utmoſt bitterneſs and ſeverity the arrogance of ſuch as have no other recommendation but their pelf. A man who prides himſelf on this account, and undervalues his ſuperiors in other reſpects, is always ſure of making thoſe his moſt dangerous enemies, whom he might have made his moſt uſeful friends.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

IN expectation that you will neglect no proper opportunity of introducing yourſelf to the company of all without exception, who may improve you, I will venture to recommend to your notice a claſs of men who lately made a conſiderable figure in France.

Theſe are the Jeſuits. Whatever objections the ſtate might have to alledge againſt them in other reſpects, it cannot be denied that they were the moſt learned and moſt ingenious of all the religious orders eſtabliſhed in France; and at the ſame time the moſt uſeful to the public, from the aſſiduity and diligence which they diſplayed in the inſtruction of youth.

The moſt celebrated colleges in that kingdom were under their management.

More men of genius and literature were formed under their tuition, than in any others. They cultivated every branch of polite knowledge with the moſt ſplendid ſucceſs. It may be confidently aſſerted, that they alone have produced more proficients in arts and ſciences, than all the other orders of the Roman communion put together.

Conſiderations of this kind, which are founded on ſtrict truth, have made it a matter of aſtoniſhment among the moſt ſenſible people in Europe, both Proteſtants as well as Roman Catholics, that ſo general a conſpiracy ſhould have been formed againſt them; as it does not appear that their conduct has latterly been more liable to reprehenſion than in preceding periods; or that their principles are altered from what they originally were at the time of their primitive inſtitution.

But leaving the diſquiſition of theſe matters to thoſe who may be better informed,

formed, ſuffice it to obſerve, that they are a ſtriking inſtance of the inſtability of human eſtabliſhments.

No claſs of men flouriſhed with ſo much luſtre, and enjoyed ſuch reputation and credit. The firſt families in the kingdom prided themſelves in the enjoyment of their good-will and predilection, and were happy to live in habits of intimacy with their principal members. Their colleges were filled with youths of the firſt rank; and they had the choice of the whole realm for the ſelection of thoſe whom they thought proper to admit into their body.

This admiſſion was regulated by the wiſeſt maxims of policy. The qualifications neceſſary to procure acceptance, were birth, wealth, or capacity. From theſe ſources they derived a conſtant ſucceſſion of ſolid ſupporters of their proſperity. How they could, with ſo much foreſight

and precaution, meet with ſo mortifying a downfall, is truly ſurpriſing.

Independent of theſe prudential maxims in the formation of their own body, they had extended their intereſt among the great by one of the moſt influencing and forcible ties which the Roman religion could afford. They were father confeſſors to ſome of the chief perſonages in the kingdom. The king himſelf was their penitent: his confeſſor was officially a Jeſuit. They had enjoyed this high prerogative ever ſince the reign of Henry the Fourth, during a ſpace of near one hundred and ſixty years.

With all theſe advantages they could not ſtand their ground. Let not their ruin, however, impreſs you with any unfavourable ideas of their abilities. It is impoſſible to contend with power. Their enemies were ſo numerous, ſo potent, and

ſo

ſo implacable, that their deſtruction was inevitable.

Numbers of the French Exjeſuits, as they are now ſtiled, are diſperſed over all Europe. You will meet with ſome of the moſt intelligent people in France among them; and it will be entirely your fault if you do not derive much profit and entertainment from their frequentation.

You muſt perceive that I ſtrongly flatter myſelf that you will ſet yourſelf above all prejudices, and ſeek for improvement wherever it is to be found.

With this view I would not have you neglect the ſociety of perſons of the other religious orders, if you can conveniently obtain it. There are individuals of great worth in monaſteries and abbeys. Neither are they ſo ſecluded from the world, as one might be apt to imagine from the profeſſion they have embraced. Some of

them are in many reſpects perfectly acquainted with polite ſociety, and it will not be a buſineſs of any difficulty to become acquainted with ſuch of them as are deſerving of it.

Too few of our travellers think theſe claſſes of men worthy of their notice. Yet they conſtitute a conſiderable portion of the community, in all countries where the Roman Catholic perſuaſion is eſtabliſhed. Their rules and ordinances, the ſpirit of their inſtitutions, the utility or detriment which they have occaſioned to the places where they have been ſettled, the motives that gave them birth, with thoſe that cauſed their diſſolution, the individuals of note whom they have produced, all theſe are ſubjects worthy of attention to perſons who do not run abroad for mere diverſion; but who travel with a real view of informing themſelves of the nature and ſituation of men and things in the countries which they viſit.

Nil contemnere was the precept of a great modern philoſopher; who was alſo no inconſiderable traveller. This was the celebrated Monteſquieu; who uſed often to ſay, that nothing cured mankind ſo effectually of that reciprocal contempt with which ſo many nations are brought up for each other, as travel and inſpection into each others ways and manners.

But to do this in a manner conducive to the intent which he propoſed, we ſhould, on ſetting out, adopt and practiſe his preliminary maxim, and reſolve *nil contemnère*, to deſpiſe nothing; that is to ſay, to ſuffer no prejudices to lead our judgment aſtray, and to paſs no ſentence of contempt, but after an impartial examination of thoſe things that deſerve it.

Were this rule faithfully obſerved, what a different ſet of ideas and opinions would many of our travellers bring home? What a variety of objects would appear to

them trivial, on which, from inattention, they are led to ſet a groundleſs value? and how many others would they prize, which, from inadvertency, or diſſipation, they paſs by without diſcovering their real worth?

LETTER X.

I AM now going to propoſe an undertaking to you, for which I am convinced, from your diſpoſition, and the occupations which have latterly taken up a conſiderable part of your time, you are peculiarly calculated and prepared.

Nothing is more common in England, than to hear its political conſtitution extolled as the perfection of all government, and preferred to every other ſyſtem extant.

Were

Were one to ſtop ſhort one of the many vague declaimers on this trite ſubject, and queſtion him about the particulars of that inferiority, which he ſo readily aſcribes to the government of other countries, it is much to be doubted, whether the zeal of more than one in twenty, would not be found greatly to exceed his knowledge.

That you may not incur ſuch an imputation, on your return to your native country, my propoſal is, that, as you have for theſe two or three years paſt applied yourſelf to the ſtudy of its laws and conſtitution, you would at preſent dedicate a convenient portion of your time, to the inveſtigation of the actual ſyſtem of legiſlation and domeſtic rule eſtabliſhed in France.

Leſs than an hour allotted every other day to this purpoſe, will make it a paſtime; and will give you at the ſame time an

an inſight into theſe matters, of which an Engliſh gentleman ſhould not be ignorant.

Books on this topic are found in plenty among the French, ſome of them very elegantly written. I hardly know which to recommend as the beſt: that which I read with moſt ſatisfaction, was compoſed, if I remember juſtly, about thirty years ago. It is anonimous: the exact title I cannot recollect; but *abregé du gouvernement de la France*, is ſomething near it.

Another occupation not leſs material, is the political ſituation of that kingdom, its population, the ſources of its revenues, the ſtate of cultivation in its various provinces, its domeſtic and foreign trade. Theſe are objects of incomparably more importance, than thoſe which uſually ingroſs the attention of moſt of our young travellers; and, with ſhame it may be ſaid, even of thoſe gentlemen of maturer

age,

age, whom laſſitude of doing nothing at home, carries ſo often abroad.

Treatiſes on theſe matters are very far from being wanting. The curioſity of the French is ſuch, that notwithſtanding the ſeverity with which the preſs is controuled, lucubrations on all kinds of ſubjects, are ſecretly printed and vended, in ſpite of the vigilance with which they are watched.

While you are engaged in this career, let me remind you not to forget the living characters of the times. No people are ſo alert as the French, in diſcovering the tranſactions of the day: their prying diſpoſition is ever on the wing: nothing remains long a ſecret: curioſity to enquire, and loquacity to reveal, form the very eſſentials of the life and occupation of the faſhionable claſſes.

Anecdotes, in ſhort, are the ſoul of converſation among them. Invention, to be ſure,

ſure, is often at work to entertain company; but a perſon of ſagacity will, after ſome experience and practice in the ways of the people he frequents, learn to diſcern between an agreeable ſtory-teller and another upon whom he can depend.

In order to render yourſelf acceptable to French companies, you muſt aſſume ſomething of their manner, and endeavour to put on ſome appearance of their vivacity. Their chief complaint reſpecting us, is a defect of livelineſs, and a taciturnity which they ſuſpect ſometimes of being rather affected. I need not however be ſollicitous on your account; nature has given you life and ſpirit enough to face any Frenchman.

In the mean time, that you may fill your place with propriety in French companies, furniſh your memory with as many anecdotes as you can procure, concerning the people of high rank and faſhion in

England. The French, like the Greeks of old, delight in obtaining all kind of information. It is but juſtice to ſay, that they are not only willing, but deſirous to hear what paſſes worthy of obſervation among their neighbours, and extremely attentive to thoſe who are able to ſatisfy them in ſuch particulars.

You will ſoon perceive that they far exceed us in their endeavours to be acquainted with tranſactions and characters out of their country. This may appear extraordinary, when their backwardneſs to learn foreign languages is taken into conſideration: but their anſwer is, that facts exiſt independent of language, and are incomparably more entertaining and inſtructive.

This leads me to reflect, that while our people of education are at immenſe pains to ſtudy the French language, and become acquainted with their literature; they are

are unpardonably neglectful in that part of it which relates to their hiſtory and domeſtic concerns, though unqueſtionably the moſt uſeful and deſerving of their attention.

The French, on the contrary, though much leſs converſant in our language, are much better read in the affairs of this country than we are in theirs.

I have obſerved of late years an indolence and ſupineneſs reſpecting foreign matters, very ſcandalous and diſgraceful in perſons of education. *Sua tantum mirantur* is too applicable to numbers of our countrymen.

No Branch of knowledge is leſs cultivated among thoſe who profeſs an application to letters, than the hiſtorical. It is not uncommon to ſee perſons not meanly verſed in Greek and Roman literature, amazingly defective in this moſt beneficial of all gentlemanly acquirements.

Our French neighbours form a remarkable contraſt in this province. No people are more abundantly ſupplied with good hiſtories of all nations, both ancient and modern, in their own tongue; ſome of them excellent originals, and the others very correct and elegant tranſlations.

In addition to what has already been premiſed on that ſubject, it may be ſaid that in this department of literature the French exceed moſt, if not all nations. If we except the tranſlations from Greek into Latin, made at the revival of letters by the men of genius in Italy, and the Engliſh verſions of the ancient poets, the French have not only tranſlated a far greater number of foreign authors into their language, than any other people have into theirs; but they have done it in a ſtile and manner which admit of no competition in the generality of other tranſlators.

This

This may be accounted for by adverting to the vaſt difference between thoſe who tranſlate in France, and thoſe who perform the ſame taſk in other countries, in ours eſpecially. Among the French they are uſually perſons eminent for knowledge and literature, and who chiefly propoſe the acquiſition of fame. But elſewhere, in England and Holland particularly, they are too frequently unhappy gentlemen who engage in ſuch buſineſs from neceſſity; and who from the ſame motive are more intent upon diſpatch than perfection.

In this deſcription we muſt not however include thoſe members of our univerſities, who have given us verſions of the Greek and Roman claſſics. Their performances have inconteſtable merit. But then they were in much the ſame predicament as the French above-mentioned: hurried by no preſſures, and at leiſure to poliſh their work.

It

It is chiefly upon tranſlations from modern languages, and from the French in particular, theſe ſtrictures are made.

For this reaſon I would never adviſe any gentleman that wiſhes to enjoy a good French writer, to peruſe him in a tranſlation; unleſs indeed his avocations are ſuch, as abſolutely preclude him from the probability of ever having time ſufficient to beſtow on the learning of French.

I muſt not finiſh this epiſtle, without remarking, that of late the French have begun to apply themſelves with uncommon fervour to the ſtudy of foreign languages. The Engliſh in particular is now become a capital requiſite among their literati. The revolution that has deprived us of America, will in all probability render it for obvious reaſons very popular alſo in the commercial world.

LETTER XI.

THE French have, within theſe thirty or forty years, addicted themſelves to philoſophical ſpeculations with more zeal and paſſion than at any former period.

By philoſophical ſpeculations, I mean the inveſtigation of human nature, and that review of events and tranſactions, which examines and appreciates the utility or detriment reſulting from them to mankind.

Numbers of ingenious performances on ſubjects of this nature, have made their appearance within the fore-mentioned period. Some of them indeed are of the ſupremeſt merit, and have done the higheſt honour to the French nation.

Certain

Certain it is that a ſpirit of enquiry and examination has ariſen latterly in France, which has made, and continues to make an aſtoniſhing progreſs.

L'eſprit philoſophique s'eſt emparé des François, ſays one of their writers, a philoſophical turn has taken poſſeſſion of the minds of the French.

This inquiſitive diſpoſition however meets now and then with ſome obſtructions. The clergy are no friends to it, for this plain reaſon, becauſe it is no friend to the clergy.

They look upon it as an inveterate foe, reſolutely determined to operate the deſtruction of all power, and of all inſtitutions that are not founded upon reaſon.

They are conſcious at the ſame time, that according to the ideas inculcated by this new ſyſtem, much of their authority

and importance is called in queſtion: this of courſe alarms them, and awakens their jealouſy.

Happily for the adherents to the notions that begin to prevail among ſome of the moſt enlightened individuals of the French nation, the clergy has loſt much of the influence it once had among the great. The government ſupports them no longer with that blind ſubſerviency, which characteriſed the æras of ignorance and ſuperſtition.

The diminution of their credit appears in the diminution of their numbers. Much leſs conſiderable than twenty years ago, is the appearance of the ſecular and regular clergy at this day: one meets with fewer in the ſtreets and places of public reſort than formerly; one hears leſs about them; people alſo ſeem to think leſs of them: all this portends an inward decline, as it ſhews a viſible decay.

The

The French are not a little elated at this revolution in the intellectual empire, as they term it; I mean thoſe who embrace this new ſyſtem. It cannot be expected they ſhould as yet be numerous enough to form an open decided party: they ſpeak and write however with no ſmall determination: ſome productions have lately ſeen the light, inferior in boldneſs to none that were ever written on ſpeculative ſubjects in any age or country.

The ſtudy of nature flouriſhes at preſent in France, as much as in any part of Europe. We had the honour of leading the way; but the French have followed us very ſucceſsfully. What I comprehend by the ſtudy of nature, is what is uſually called natural philoſophy. In this the French no leſs excel than in the inveſtigation of thoſe moral truths and duties which bind ſociety together, and of thoſe ideas and tenets concerning abſtruſe mat-

ters, which have ſo long buſied the minds of men.

The French began in the laſt century to ſhake off the yoke of intellectual deſpotiſm. The celebrated Deſcartes had the courage, at an epocha when eccleſiaſtical power was yet very formidable, to riſe up in oppoſition to the doctrines maintained in the ſchools and univerſities, reſpecting a variety of ſubjects.

He had a mighty name to encounter, and powerful obſtacles to ſurmount. The one was Ariſtotle, who had for centuries been in poſſeſſion of the ſcholaſtical kingdom, and reigned with unrivaled ſway in every univerſity throughout Europe. The others were the influence and authority of the clergy, who were the abſolute directors of every ſeat of learning, and dreaded innovations in all ſcientific matters.

But his reſolution was invincible. In ſpite of long ſtanding prejudices, in defiance

ſiance of thoſe who abetted them, he found means to introduce a ſyſtem entirely oppoſite to that which had ſo long prevailed; and which, after an obſtinate defence, has at length been totally expelled from France, and almoſt from every other country, where it had ſo long domineered, to the excluſion of ſolid knowledge and ſound reaſoning.

It is not ſolely in phyſical ſtudies that Deſcartes opened a new method of proceeding: in points of a profounder nature he alſo ſet an example, which has been copied by numbers to a bolder extent, it has been ſaid, than he ever intended.

He was the author of that methodical doubt, as it is ſtiled, which has ever ſince been applied to every part of philoſophy. From doubting according to form, people have at laſt proceeded to doubt in reality. This, as it might well be expected, has effected ſtrange alterations in many things.

The French pretend, not without reaſon, to have produced as illuſtrious philoſophers and ſpeculators as any nation; and that human nature is no leſs indebted to their reſearches, than to thoſe of any other.

It is with equal gratitude and pleaſure an impartial man will acknowledge their claim. No names in the republic of ſcience and literature are ſuperior to ſome that France can mention.

Two performances have lately been given to the learned world in that country, which do it peculiar honour, from their univerſal utility, as well as from the maſterlineſs of their execution, and the immenſity of the undertaking.

The one is the Encyclopedia, the other is the Hiſtory of Nature. The firſt is the joint compoſition of the moſt able, ingenious, and learned men in France; and is a univerſal depoſitory of arts and ſciences,

of whatever, in ſhort, is worthy of commanding the attention of man. It is compiled with infinite labour and judgment, and digeſted in the moſt elegant and intereſting manner.

The ſecond is chiefly the work of a ſingle individual, the famous Buffon, now dignified with the title of Count. It is written with a gracefulneſs, perſpicuity, and preciſion, that recommend it no leſs than the importance of the ſubject.

Both theſe performances merit your purchaſe and your ſtudy: they certainly have nothing ſuperior in their kind.

As you travel from ſincere views of improvement, and propoſe to embrace every opportunity of acquiring uſeful knowledge, I feel no repugnance in exhorting you to unite a vigorous application to books with the ſtudy of mankind. Far from proving a mutual embaraſſment, they are in fact the ſtancheſt

ſtancheſt and moſt effectual ſupport to each other. If you examine thoſe among your acquaintance who know the world beſt, and make the moſt ſplendid figure in it, you will conſtantly find, that they are men who have applied themſelves no leſs to the lucubrations of the cloſet, than to the occupations and paſtimes of ſocial life.

It is from the conſciouſneſs of the motives that lead you abroad, that I expatiate ſo largely upon all that relates to literature.

You will find it, if not in greater requeſt, upon a more agreeable footing in France than among your own countrymen. I do not think, from what I have heard elderly perſons in England expreſs on this ſubject, that there is the ſame demand for literary talents among our great people as formerly. The rage and violence of parties is a malady attended by many

many more evil conſequences than men are in general aware of. It not only baniſhes candour from political affairs, but it extinguiſhes the propenſity to polite knowledge; and renders individuals inſenſible to all other merit than that of being able to aſſiſt them in the purſuits of faction.

To this inauſpicious diſpoſition of the times, is owing the decline of that warmth with which letters were once cultivated; and that indifference for their encouragement, which is become notorious even in the perception of judicious and obſervant foreigners.

Voltaire takes notice ſomewhere, that in England *on n'écrit gueres que par eſprit de parti*, little is written but from ſpirit of party. This ſtricture is rather too ſevere; but he might have aſſerted with great truth, that unleſs a writer knows how to render his pen ſerviceable in the

cauſe of party, he will ſeldom riſe to any conſiderable degree of fame and proſperity.

I do not by theſe reflections mean to impreſs you with a notion, that literary men ſhould forſwear the diſcuſſion of political ſubjects: on the contrary, it is ſhameful in a gentleman of learning not to be well converſant in ſuch matters. What is the purport of education, but to enable men to think, ſpeak, and write judiciouſly on all points of importance, and what is more important than the welfare and intereſts of the community at large?

It is not therefore an application to political knowledge that is reprehended; it is the excluſive encouragement given to the zeal and dexterity that are manifeſted in the cauſe of party.

In this unhappy cauſe it ſometimes happens, that a man may render himſelf extremely

extremely ſerviceable without poſſeſſing any talents of real utility to the public. Little or no knowledge is required, but of the reſpective deſigns and circumſtances of each party, their ſchemes, their manœuvres, the particularities reſpecting their heads and leaders: with all this an individual may be acquainted without any material acquaintance with any thing elſe.

True it is that party writers may be, and often are men of real unqueſtionable abilities in a variety of inſtances: but ſtill it is not in this light they are brought forward, and meet with ſucceſs: it is purely for having laboured in that field, which requires no other talents to cultivate than thoſe that are above mentioned.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

PURSUANT to my expectation that you will engage with due warmth in the proſecution of gentlemanly knowledge, I will venture to review the names and characters of ſome of the principal perſonages in the French literary world; in order that you may be at no loſs in ſelecting thoſe whom it concerns you to make a part of your library.

At the head of French literature ſtands inconteſtably the name of Voltaire, *quem dixiſſe ſat eſt.*

The French are juſtly proud of this celebrated man. No country ever produced a more univerſal genius. In hiſtory and tragedy none of his countrymen ſurpaſs him; and in epic poetry none equal him.

Corneille,

Corneille, Racine, Crebillon, and Voltaire, are the four greateſt tragic poets in France, as Shakeſpear, Otway, Dryden, and Rowe, are eſteemed in England; with this difference however, that while Shakeſpear enjoys undiſputed ſupremacy with us, the French are divided in their opinions whom to prefer.

A French wit thus appreciates their merits: *Corneille peint les heros tels qu'ils devroient être; Racine tels qu'ils ſont; Crebillon tels qu'ils ne devroient pas etre; et Voltaire tels qu'ils ſouhaiteroient de paroitre.* Corneille paints heroes as they ought to be; Racine as they are; Crebillon as they ſhould not be; and Voltaire as they would wiſh to appear. This you will ſay is a conciſe method of characteriſing them. It is not however ill-founded; and agrees with one ſtill ſhorter: *Corneille eſt fort; Racine, tendre; Crebillon, terrible; Voltaire, brillant.* Corneille is nervous; Racine, tender; Crebillon, dreadful; Voltaire, ſplendid.

Of

Of the numerous plays written by Corneille, only ſix are ever acted at this day. I will mention them, that you may give them a peruſal, as they are maſterpieces: Le Cid, Cinna, Pompée, les Horaces, Polieucte, Rodogune. They are written with a majeſty of ſtile and ſentiments that has long charmed all Europe.

The tragedies of Racine, one or two excepted, are ſtill acted with the higheſt applauſe. As they amount to no more than ten, read them all with attention. For purity of language, elegance and dignity of thought, and regularity of compoſition, the unanimous opinion of the world pronounces him ſecond to none.

The tragedies of Crebillon and Voltaire merit no leſs an entire reading. Each in his peculiar line is full of beauties. The former enters deeply into the paſſions, and by the terrible ſubjects he has choſen, excites rather terror than pity. The latter

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ſurpriſes, through the variety of characters he has brought on the ſcene. He diſplays every where a profound knowledge of human nature. No writer is more copious, eloquent, and pathetic. He deſcribes men and things in the ſtrongeſt and moſt vivid colours, and ſhews himſelf a complete maſter in the ſcience of the world. It is needleſs to recommend ſuch an author to your peruſal.

Theſe are the four pillars of French tragedy; *les quatres pilliers de la tragedie Françoiſe*, as one of their countrymen ſtiles them: thoſe which form the baſis of its merit and glory; and whom they ſcruple not openly to prefer to Sophocles and Euripides; in ſhort, to every tragic writer either of ancient or modern date.

There are other authors of merit in the tragic line, ſuch as Marmontel, Greſſet, and Delaplace; this latter has tranſlated Venice preſerved, and other Engliſh plays.

Notwithſtanding the French tragedies are all in rhime, yet I never found it obſtructive of my attention to the deſign, the characters and action of the piece. Reflection teaches us that people do not ſpeak in verſe, much leſs in rhime; but if the language is otherwiſe unaffected, we preſently forget thoſe particularities, and attend to the main ſcope of the repreſentation before us.

A favourable circumſtance accompanies this method of writing. It obliges an author to poliſh and refine his diction much more than if mere proſe were allowed. If this holds with reſpect to blank verſe, it is ſtill more obſervable in regard to rhime. Nothing can be more finiſhed and correct than the language in French tragedies: perhaps indeed they have more correctneſs and refinement than is ſuitable to tragedy; which being the language of the paſſions, does not require ſo ſtudied and laboured a ſtile.

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But on the other hand they have this advantage: they entertain you in the cloſet almoſt as much as on the ſtage; and ſometimes more, from the leiſure you have to examine and admire the beauties of diction. The fine paſſages too are more eaſily retained.

I will not enter upon a diſcuſſion of the reſpective merits of the French and Engliſh tragedies. They are both excellent in their kind, as they are both adapted to the genius of the two nations. Their taſte is not leſs different in this than in many other inſtances; and the Engliſh have no more right to cenſure that of the French, than the French that of the Engliſh.

I have ſometimes been inclined to ſelect the moſt beautiful paſſages in the French and Engliſh tragic writers, that correſponded in ſubject and manner of being treated. Such a

ſelection would afford the completeſt opportunity of comparing them, and of tracing the national genius of both people, in the various light they view and deſcribe events and characters, and in the feelings and ſentiments to which theſe give riſe.

The French, notwithſtanding they are ſo gay and airy, ſeem to delight in tragedy more than the Engliſh, who are ſo much more ſerious and grave. The reaſon may be, that perſons of this latter caſt are more in want of ſome lively paſtime than the others; whoſe native jocundity of diſpoſition ſtands leſs in need of refreſhment and ſupport.

The French comic writers are amazingly numerous. Two of them however excel the reſt beyond all compariſon. I need not tell you that Moliere is one. The other, though not ſo well known in England, is no leſs eſteemed and popular in France. This is Regnard; whoſe plays, though

though inferior in number, yield not in merit to thoſe of the former.

Wit, gaiety, life, merriment, and humour, fill the compoſitions of thoſe two writers: not only the French, but all who underſtand their language, are inchanted with them: their excellencies are ſo various and ſtriking, that one knows not in what either of them has any ſuperiority. If one may venture to aſſign their peculiar merit, Moliere is the greateſt moraliſt; and Regnard the greateſt exciter of mirth.

I muſt intreat you to read them both with particular care. They will give you an ample theory of the French character in ſocial life; and enable you to raiſe with eaſe and pleaſure, that ſuperſtructure of practical knowledge, which can only ariſe from company and converſation.

There are alſo others beſides theſe two, who have written comedies that have met

with vaſt applauſe. Among the foremoſt of theſe are Deſtouches, and La Chauſſée. This latter is the inventor of a new kind of comedy, called by the French *la Comedie larmoiante*, correſponding exactly with what we call ſentimental comedy.

As I would not burthen your memory with more than is abſolutely neceſſary, or highly uſeful, I think you may content yourſelf with reading *La Prejugé a la Mode* of *La Chauſſée*, and *le Philoſophe Marié*, with *Le Glorieux* of *Deſtouches*; being their beſt productions.

The numerous plays of Boiſſy, and Marivaux, are all of the light and mirthful kind. You will ſee them often enough, as well as other dramatic performances of the ſame caſt, chiefly at the Italian theatre, ſo called by preſcription, but where all the merrieſt French pieces are conſtantly acted.

You

You will not repent however the reading of *Le Mechant* by Greſſet, and *La Metromanie* by Piron, both admirable comedies.

I began with the theatre, becauſe I imagine it is the place where you will firſt begin your endeavours to perfect yourſelf in the knowledge of the French language. As the *utile* concurs with the *dulce* in this ſchool, I recommend it in preference to any other.

Before I cloſe this preſent, I will ſay a word or two on a paſtime, which is in much higher requeſt in France than has hitherto been its fate in England.

The French tragic opera, however deficient in muſical merit, is the firſt in Europe in reſpect of poetical. In proof of this, one need only mention the names of Quinaut, Fontenelle, Voltaire, and Marmontel.

Quinaut is worth your peruſal. There is a ſoftneſs and harmony in his verſification, and a gracefulneſs in his ideas and ſentiments, that captivate all who have the leaſt turn for compoſitions of love and tenderneſs.

The comic opera in France is the moſt diverting of all elegant amuſements. The native genius of the French for mirth and pleaſantry, ſhines here in all its glory. The compoſitions of Vadé, Piron, and Favart, are the very ſummit of all that is joyous and laughable.

LETTER XIII.

BESIDES dramatic poetry, you will meet in France with excellent performances in the other Branches of that delightful art.

In lyrics, in ſatire, and in fables, the French have no ſuperiors among the moderns.

moderns. Boileau, Rouſſeau, and La Fontaine, are claſſics of the firſt rank, whether we conſider their language or their matter.

The good ſenſe, and energy, the correctneſs, and elegance of Boileau, equal him to any of the ancient ſatiriſts; and his art of poetry is a work that has no ſuperior in its kind: it rivals Horace in fire and judgment, and ſurpaſſes him in order and method. His Lutrin is the model on which the Heroi-comic poems produced ſince his time, have in a great meaſure been formed. It claims, with the Rape of the Lock, the honour of being one of the two moſt beautiful originals in that ſpecies of compoſition, written in any language.

The odes of Rouſſeau are the nobleſt performances in that line ſince the days of Horace. Dryden and Pope have each greatly diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their cele-

celebrated ode: but allowing them all the merit which they have a right to claim, it were highly unjuſt to place them on a level with a man who has compoſed ſo large a number of odes; every one of them excelling in all the requiſites of that branch of poetry; correctneſs, elegance, copiouſneſs, and ſublimity.

La Fontaine is the favourite of all who are able to read him. He may be ſtiled the poet of nature. Eaſy, flowing, unaffected, full of wiſdom couched under the pureſt ſimplicity, and moſt inſtructive where moſt entertaining.

Read or rather meditate theſe three authors. They are the propereſt of any for promiſcuous peruſal at any time; as their ſubjects are unconnected, and the longeſt of them may be ſoon diſpatched.

I now come to that poet who has reſcued France from the reproach of not having produced an epic poem.

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This poet you readily comprehend to be Voltaire. The French, and many beſide, have long conſidered him as having written upon the moſt uſeful topic he could have choſen. The deſign of the *Henriade*, is to teach mankind the neceſſity of legal obedience, the calamities ariſing from religious diſſentions, the evils concomitant on faction, and the horrors of civil war.

One of the principal beauties of this noble poem, is, that the faithfulleſt homage is paid to truth throughout the whole. The precepts and leſſons it offers are enforced by facts, and illuſtrated by realities; and the embelliſhments are ſtrictly conſiſtent with the taſte and ideas of the times.

It is not only an epic, but an hiſtorical poem of the moſt meritorious tendency; as it treats of the moſt important period,

not only in the Hiſtory of France, but in that of all Europe.

The impartial energy with which it deſcribes the actors and tranſactions of that ſtormy period, the judicious light it throws upon events, the ſtrict juſtice it does to the celebrated characters that come under repreſentation, all contribute to intereſt the reader much more than the moſt ingenious fiction could poſſibly have done.

It is in this particular that Voltaire has raiſed himſelf ſo many adherents and admirers. He lived in an age, when the minds of men began every where to ſhake off the fetters of religious prejudice and fanaticiſm. Nothing therefore could be more acceptable to them than a work wherein the miſeries originating from thence ſhould be expoſed with ſtrength and vivacity. He alſo ſaw that the temper of the times required inſtruction to be blended with entertainment, and that the

univerſal turn to politics among the European nations, would be peculiarly delighted with a performance formed on their favourite plan.

How well he has correſponded with the diſpoſition of his cotemporaries, let the prodigious ſucceſs of his work teſtify. He was the more praiſe-worthy for coinciding with the general inclination, as it was manly and laudable. Mere fiction, however decorated by genius, was no longer able to pleaſe. The accompanyment of truth was demanded, in order to render it palatable to men of thought and judgment.

Conformably to theſe maxims, his poem is in ſome meaſure a continued lecture of the ſoundeſt policy. It inculcates every maxim neceſſary to form the ſtateſman, the hero, and the good citizen. If hiſtory is philoſophy teaching by example, the *Henriade* is certainly one of the nobleſt

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of all philoſophical inſtructions, as it employs ſo forcibly the united advantages of hiſtory and poetry.

Of all French poems, look oftenest to this and to the excellent notes with which it is accompanied: they breathe a ſpirit of ſenſe, virtue, and judiciouſneſs; and they contain abundance of intereſting and curious anecdotes.

Voltaire has written a variety of other poetical performances, all of unqueſtionable merit; but the Henriade, and his tragedies, are what I chiefly commend to your peruſal.

Next to thoſe I have been mentioning, you may dedicate ſome of your leiſure hours to *Greſſet* and *Racine*, ſon to the famous tragic poet of that name. This latter is author of two very remarkable poems, on religion, and divine grace: the ſubjects are

are very ſerious; but he has treated them in a very elegant and pleaſing manner.

While we are engaged in this review of French poetry, it may not be amiſs to ſay ſomething of the poetical works of the famous philoſopher of *Sans Soucy*. This, I ſuppoſe, you know to be no leſs a perſonage than the King of Pruſſia.

Though not a Frenchman, he has written a number of excellent things in proſe and verſe in the French language. It is incumbent on every gentleman to be acquainted with the ſentiments of ſuch a man as the King of Pruſſia; not becauſe he is a king, but becauſe he is a great king, one of the greateſt that ever exiſted.

But independent of his exalted rank, his works are worthy of a royal pen. He writes as he governs, with wiſdom, power, and majeſty. His thoughts are like his actions,

actions, great, uncommon, ſurpriſing; and denote every where an extraordinary character.

LETTER XIV.

THE French have long been noted for romances and novels. They overflowed the laſt century like an inundation; and vitiated during a conſiderable time the taſte of almoſt all Europe.

When people of curioſity and leiſure, are at the pains of peruſing ſome of the voluminous productions of that ſort, which were in ſuch requeſt at that æra, it cannot fail to aſtoniſh them, that compoſitions ſo wild, ſo abſurd, and ſo bombaſtic, ſhould find ſuch multitudes of readers.

There are none of them deſerving the leaſt attention. In fact, they are totally forgotten at this day. The taſte of the

French nation has long ſince undergone an entire alteration; and will admit of nothing that is not correct and regular.

But though they reject the turgid and unnatural romances of former days, they are willing to admit of novels written with elegance of ſtile and probability of incidents.

Some of the moſt approved writers in this line are Marmontel, Crebillon, ſon to the celebrated tragic author, Marivaux; and Prevot, known for his numerous tranſlations from the Engliſh.

Among the novels of prime note muſt be claſſed *les Memoires de la Vie du Comte de Grammont*, by Hamilton. It is an original in point of ſtile and of method; full of wit and pleaſantry; and keeping truth in view in the midſt of laughter and merriment.

As time is precious, eſpecially to a traveller, ſtint yourſelf chiefly to theſe: or if you cannot refrain from others, conſult the moſt judicious of your French acquaintance, which have the vogue of the day; that being uſually the principal merit of ſuch productions.

From the ſeverity of this ſtricture, I am bound however, by all the laws of criticiſm, to except *Gil Blas*, and *le Diable Boiteaux*, both written by Le Sage. Never was a truer and more entertaining picture of human life and manners exhibited than the former, nor a keener and more witty ſatire on vice and folly than the latter. His *Bachelier de Salamanque* may deſervedly keep them company.

I cannot deny that there are abundance of other ingenious performances in the ſame line, written in French: but I am at the ſame time ſo deſirous that you ſhould apply yourſelf to ſomething more

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ſolid and profitable, that I do not chuſe to enlarge upon this ſubject.

You will meet but with too many opportunities of ſacrificing time to ſuch amuſements. Numbers of the gay world read nothing elſe but ſuch books. You will find them too often on the tables of the literati, and the toilets of both your male and female acquaintances at their country houſes; for here the French of all ages and denominations deem themſelves at liberty to think of nothing but mere paſtime and pleaſure.

There are two works in the French language, which ſome have thought proper to mention in the catalogue of romances: but they certainly deſerve a higher place: theſe are Telemachus, and the Travels of Cyrus.

The firſt, though written in proſe; is unqueſtionably the beautifulleſt poem in

every other reſpect that ever appeared in the French Tongue. The ſecond is an exquiſite ſelection and arrangement of hiſtorical facts, connected together by a judicious fable, tending to form and enlighten the underſtanding, and at the ſame time to enrich the memory with a large portion of uſeful knowledge.

No modern production has met with more applauſe than Telemachus. It has indeared the name of Fenelon, its illuſtrious author, to the whole world. But the Travels of Cyrus have not, if I may venture an opinion, been ſufficiently diffuſed in the literary circles of Europe.

On their firſt appearance they had ſome enemies to encounter in the field of criticiſm: but their defects were ſo ſlight, and ſo readily rectified, that they ſoon gained their author, the celebrated Ramſay, a prodigious reputation. The ingenuity and erudition ſo judiciouſly blended in this perform-

performance, render it of the moſt extenſive utility, and afford equal pleaſure and inſtruction.

It may not be improper to take notice, that this is another inſtance of a foreigner producing a work of prime merit in the French language; Mr. Ramſay being a native of Scotland.

I will conclude this ſhort epiſtle by adviſing you to compare the French tranſlation of Tom Jones by Monſ. Delaplace, with the Engliſh original. Study the various dictions, examine the different turns of both languages: this will give you a complete idea of their reſpective idioms; and enable you upon occaſion to tranſlate with facility and correctneſs.

LETTER XV.

I NOW come to that branch of literature wherein the merit of the French is confeſſedly very eminent.

This branch is hiſtory, till very lately too much neglected in England, but long ſince cultivated in France with great aſſiduity and ſucceſs.

The firſt French book of this kind I would earneſtly wiſh you to read, is *Diſcours ſur l'Hiſtoire Univerſelle*, by Boſſuet. It is a chronological account of the world until the cloſe of the eighth century. It is written with great eloquence, and is full of learning and inſtruction.

Les Diſcours ſur l'Hiſtoire Eccleſiaſtique, by Fleury, is another object I muſt point out to your attention. They are the very

pith and eſſence of all that is worth knowing on this matter. Peruſe them with care and diligence, and do it more than once.

His *Traité des Etudes* claims alſo your notice. It is an hiſtorical abſtract of the ancient methods of ſtudying, with excellent directions what books, and in what manner to ſtudy.

The Hiſtory of France, by Father Daniel, is the beſt extant. I do not propoſe him as a faultleſs writer: but he is copious, exact, and, conſidering his ſituation in life, more impartial than could almoſt be expected. His ſtile is correct and flowing; and though not remarkable for energy, is clear, unaffected, and altogether very pleaſing.

A work which, for its intrinſic and evident utility, claims a high conſideration in the republic of letters, is the Ancient

Hiſtory, by Rollin. If any man deſerved well of youth, it is certainly he. No one has ſo greatly facilitated the means of that knowledge which becomes a gentleman. He wrote with an eloquence and dignity befitting his ſubject; and well deſerves the words I have ſeen under a print of him, *Lege et relege.* Forget not Crevier, the elegant continuator of his Hiſtory of Rome.

Rapin Thoiras ſhould be read by an Engliſhman on two accounts: he has written the hiſtory of our country; and he has done it with impartiality. His ſtile is rather dry and frigid; but his judgment and penetration make ample amends.

Father Orleans has treated of the ſame ſubject in a far more entertaining manner. As you have years and diſcretion ſufficient to think for yourſelf, you may peruſe him without any danger to thoſe principles

which ought ever to be uppermoſt in an Engliſhman.

Vertot is a writer whoſe diction is equally correct and eloquent. He is full of entertainment; and few authors are more in requeſt with their countrymen. His Revolutions of Sweden and of Rome are highly eſteemed, the latter eſpecially.

The Hiſtory of the famous League of Cambray againſt the Republic of Venice, by Dubos, is a performance of ſingular merit: it diſplays a fund of political knowledge, very curious and intereſting to ſuch as are deſirous of being well acquainted with that important and celebrated period. It is written in a noble and elevated ſtile, and has met with the univerſal acceptance of all Europe.

A compoſition of peculiar merit is the Life of Henry the Fourth of France, by Perefixe. It was deſigned for the inſtruc-

tion

tion of Lewis the Fourteenth, by the author, who was his preceptor. It abounds with excellent paſſages, and is incomparably the beſt account of the reign and actions of that great monarch: it is a book which every prince ought to read.

There is an abridgment of the French hiſtory, written of late years by Monſ. Henaut, a man of uncommon abilities and ſagacity: it is extolled as a moſt perfect and finiſhed performance.

St. Real is an author whoſe hiſtorical pieces have met with extraordinary praiſe. The Spaniſh conſpiracy againſt Venice is unanimouſly allowed to be a maſter-piece.

The learned Tillemont's Hiſtory of the Roman Emperors, is written with an exactitude and care, and with a correctneſs and preciſion of ſtile that have procured him the higheſt reputation.

All

All theſe writers, I doubt not, you will beſtow the utmoſt diligence in peruſing. I could have mentioned many others very deſerving; but theſe are inconteſtably the firſt upon the hiſtorical catalogue.

If I have omitted the celebrated Abbé Raynal, it is not becauſe I have forgotten him; but that his writings are of a particular claſs, being a mixture of hiſtory and philoſophy, blending and ſupporting each other in a manner that renders him an original in this ſort of compoſition.

I recommend him to your moſt attentive peruſal. His head and his heart ſeem of the pureſt and ſublimeſt frame. No writer appears more ſincerely zealous for the common happineſs of ſociety; none more determined to promote it by the uniform tenour of all his writings.

Another hiſtorical performance of an original nature, is the Conſiderations on

the

the Riſe and Decline of Rome, by the illuſtrious Monteſquieu.

I will not have the vanity to ſay any thing in praiſe of a work that is above all commendation. The concurrent teſtimony of all Europe has long pronounced it to be the nobleſt monument of hiſtorical wiſdom that ever yet appeared. It is read by all nations as a book of oracles; and has left nothing to be added on the ſubjects it has treated.

A perſon of great rank and dignity, and of no leſs diſcernment and ſagacity, has intitled this famous performance The Roman Hiſtory, written for the uſe of Kings and Miniſters of ſtate. This is a compendious but fully expreſſive elogium.

I will cloſe this review of the principal hiſtorians among the French with Voltaire. He is by accurate judges eſteemed not only one of the beſt, but the very beſt hiſtorian

hiſtorian that nation has produced. He excels in all the qualities required in that province; imagination, fire, elocution, judgment; he poſſeſſes them all in perfection: his language is elegance itſelf, and his ſtile is full of grandeur and energy: his characters are drawn to the life; and his deſcriptions are pictures that ſtrike the eye, and turn his readers into ſpectators.

His Hiſtory of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, and that of Lewis the Fourteenth of France, have immortalized them together with himſelf. You cannot be too much converſant in both theſe admirable performances.

Will you permit me to add a word in favour of three compoſitions, from which, as I have derived much pleaſure, I flatter myſelf you will do the ſame. Theſe are the Hiſtory of Lewis the Eleventh of France, by Duclos, that of Sobieſki, by Coyer, and the Life of the Emperor Julian, ſurnamed

ſurnamed the Philoſopher by ſome, and by others the Apoſtate, written by Lableterie.

Of all branches of polite knowledge, hiſtory is the moſt uſeful, as well as the moſt ornamental to a gentleman. It is that which teaches him the ſcience of ſtates and nations, and fits him to make a figure on the great theatre of the world.

An Engliſh gentleman ſhould be particularly verſed in hiſtory; not only that of his own country, but thoſe of as many others as he can poſſibly ſpare time to read and ſtudy. It is chiefly by an application of this kind that he will become of public utility: he will learn what courſes to avoid, by contemplating the calamities they have occaſioned; and what meaſures to purſue, by conſidering the benefits they have produced.

Men

Men of rank and fortune in ſome other countries, may doubtleſs attain the ſame knowledge; but in them it will prove inactive and fruitleſs: it is only in ſtates bleſt with liberty that ſuch a ſcience is not a dead letter to the poſſeſſor.

Study therefore hiſtory beyond all other ſubjects. It will bring you moſt honour and profit: it will enable you to ſhine in public deliberations, and to act upon neceſſary occaſions. It will, in ſhort, ſupply the demands of both theory and practice.

But were you deſtined to ſpend your life at a diſtance from the buſy ſcenes of the political world, ſtill it is highly becoming an individual of condition above the vulgar in this land of liberty, to qualify himſelf to judge of what paſſes on the ſtage of public tranſactions.

In this light, hiſtory is an amuſement and a benefit: it relieves our leiſure hours,

and

and teaches us at the ſame time what to applaud and what to condemn: it is attended alſo with another conſequence of ſtill greater weight; when people in power know that their conduct will undergo the examination of an intelligent public, able to weigh their actions in the ſcale of hiſtorical compariſon, and to judge of the preſent by the paſt, they will certainly pay more deference to its opinion, and will endeavour to deſerve its approbation by the rectitude of their meaſures.

Hiſtory however can never be again on the ſame footing of ſplendour it was in ages of old.

Whatever hiſtorians France, or any modern nation may have produced, let us not imagine they bear any proportion in point of merit to thoſe of antiquity.

Two reaſons concur to decide in favour of theſe: they were born and bred in republics,

publics, and enjoyed an unlimited freedom in the manifeſtation of their thoughts; and they wrote in a ſuperior language.

Should any one object the examples of Livy and Tacitus, let them recollect that the firſt wrote at a time, when tho' liberty was oppreſt, it was not extinguiſhed. Auguſtus did not wiſh to appear its enemy; on the contrary, he always ſpoke with the utmoſt reſpect of the ſovereignty of the Roman people: hence a great degree of liberty remained, not only in appearance, but alſo in reality.

Tacitus wrote under the Emperor Trajan, the greateſt friend to the rights and liberties of mankind that ever ſat upon a throne.

But the hiſtorians of modern ages have not had the ſame advantages. To ſay nothing of the inferiority of their language, which however is a weighty conſideration,

they were the ſubjects of monarchs, and had meaſures to keep.

From theſe two cauſes, we never can expect ſuch hiſtorians to ariſe again as thoſe of Greece and Rome. One alone of theſe cauſes is ſufficient to rank them above modern writers; and one of them is ſure to ſubſiſt, were the other to ceaſe.

Whatever degree of liberty may become the portion of mankind, there is no likelihood that in any future age a language will be formed equal to the Greek or Latin.

In this reſpect we muſt be content to yield perpetual precedence to the ancients: happy if we can compenſate this deficiency, by equalling them in that exquiſiteneſs of ſenſe and judgment, for which they are not leſs conſpicuous than the unrivalled beauty of their language.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

AFTER viewing the ſtate of hiſtory in France, let us next proceed to that of their oratory.

The ſame reaſons aſſigned for the inferiority of their hiſtorians, are equally concluſive for the inferiority of their orators.

In this department, from the frame of our conſtitution, we are unqueſtionably much ſuperior to the French.

Nature has given them undoubtedly as brilliant and as ſolid faculties as to any other nation: this fully appears by the excellence of their productions on thoſe ſubjects where they have nothing to fetter their abilities.

But even in the field of eloquence, as it conſiſts of various parts, they ſhine occaſionally with undeniable luſtre.

This field is very ſpacious. It is not therefore to be expected that any ſingle capacity ſhall fill it completely.

The vaſt variety it affords muſt of courſe open various careers to range in. Not to loſe ourſelves however in too indefinite a view, let us confine our examination to the principal branches of this wide ſpreading tree, in order to aſcertain with preciſion thoſe which the French have cultivated with moſt ſucceſs.

Oratory may be comprehended in ſix diviſions, the ſenate, the bar, the pulpit, the academy, the ſtage, and common diſcourſe.

In the firſt of theſe we cannot imagine that any people will diſtinguiſh themſelves,

ſelves, unleſs they enjoy a free conſtitution. Debates on public matters, carried on with the utmoſt freedom and unreſtraint of ſentiments, are the only ſoil where this nobleſt ſpecies of eloquence will proſper.

Until therefore a revolution happens in the government of France, the French muſt reſign all pretenſions to figure with any diſtinction in this line.

In the ſecond, a people, without the poſſeſſion of conſtitutional liberty, may appear with much ſplendour; but not however with as much grandeur and dignity, as if the laws alone had the ſupreme deciſion.

Hence, notwithſtanding the correctneſs and elegance that characteriſe the pleadings at the French bar, they are evidently deficient in that fortitude and reſoluteneſs

of expreſſion, which attend cauſes here wherein the ſtate is in any wiſe concerned.

As both nations profeſs the ſame religion, one would think they would reſemble each other in the manner of inculcating its doctrines and morals: yet even here the native diſpoſition of the two people is remarkable. The French are warm, impetuous, and ſtrongly ſwayed by imagination: the Engliſh cool, ſedate, and chiefly guided by reaſoning.

Impartiality requires it, however, to be acknowledged that appearances are in favour of the French. Whether their preachers poſſeſs greater talents than ours, or whether the French are more eaſily moved, you will often ſee an audience almoſt univerſally drowned in tears, on occaſions which admit of the pathetic. This neither you, nor I, nor any perſon of my acquaintance, I am poſitively certain,

tain, from having aſked the queſtion, ever ſaw in England.

The honours of academical eloquence, to ſpeak the language of card-players, may be divided. I have read a pretty good number of orations ſpoken at the univerſity meetings, and college-ſolemnities, in both countries, without finding myſelf inclined to adjudge the prize to either of the parties.

The elocution of the ſtage is a very diſputable point. In all countries there ſeems a ſtandard of ſpeaking, calculated to pleaſe the natives, and none elſe; or only ſuch as have by long reſidence naturalized themſelves to the place. It is not equitable for this reaſon to pronounce definitively upon this ſubject; as it is not the matter ſpoken, but the manner of ſpeaking it, that is in litigation.

It may however be ſurmiſed, that as the French plays are moſtly in metre, this

cannot fail to influence, in ſome meaſure, the pronunciation of the actors, and to make it appear more ſtudied than if they were in proſe: this is viſible in our tragedies in England; where notwithſtanding the verſification is leſs fettered than in France, being only in blank verſe, whereas the French is in rhime, ſtill there is a ſtiffneſs of ſpeech, of which even the beſt of our actors can ſeldom diveſt themſelves.

The agreeableneſs in the diſcourſe of people of education in France is well known. Their converſation pleaſes not only from the chearfulneſs of their diſpoſition, but equally from its elegance, and their choice and command of words and phraſes.

In this latter ſpecies of eloquence, I apprehend you will find the French uncommonly expert. The vivacity and quickneſs of conception which characteriſe them, are no where more perceptible than when engaged in a tête-a-tête diſcuſſion: their manner

manner on ſuch occaſions is very prepoſſeſſing; and the people of other countries, beſides our own, have often experienced to their coſt, how much the French excel in the ſcience of carrying their point, whenever it is to be effected by the arts of perſuaſion.

We have now gone through the oſtenſible diviſions of oratory. But it is made up of many other parts, ſmall indeed and almoſt imperceptible, but very effectual and conducive to the ends for which they are employed.

A word ſometimes is worth a long oration. Even the look or accent with which it is pronounced, has been amazingly deciſive. I appeal to thoſe who have ſeen variety of ſcenes in life: they beſt can tell how often affairs have been decided by ſuch means.

In

In theſe inſtantaneous exertions of thought the French are admirable. If therefore they are deficient in the grander and more ſtriking parts of eloquence, let us frankly allow them to be complete maſters of this one; which is perhaps of more diffuſive utility in the general affairs of private life.

After ſaying thus much on a ſubject, which I thought it neceſſary you ſhould examine with ſome attention, let us now proceed to enquire into the merit of thoſe individuals in France, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their eloquence, as far as their ſubjects enabled them, and other circumſtances permitted.

I have already obſerved, that none of that eloquence which flouriſhed in the popular aſſemblies at Rome and Athens, can be found in France.

But

But in default of this, the French courts of judicature have produced ſpeakers of great eminence in judicial matters. The printed ſpeeches and law diſſertations of the late Chancellor D'Agueſſeau, are highly deſerving your peruſal. He was unqueſtionably a man of the ſublimeſt parts, and one of the moſt perfect and complete orators ever produced in France. It is a real detriment to literature, that ſo few ſpecimens remain of his talents for oratory: his compoſitions were looked upon by his cotemporaries as maſter-pieces; and you will, I doubt not, be of the ſame opinion when you have peruſed thoſe he has left. What has been ſaid of D'Agueſſeau may with equal juſtice be applied to the illuſtrious Lamvignon, firſt Preſident of the Parliament of Paris a century ago.

The lawyer in France, who has been principally celebrated for introducing regularity and method into the buſineſs of pleading, is Patru. Read him with attention:

tention: he will teach you, together with elegance and purity of language, many particulars relating to the French laws, very deſerving of your knowledge.

The famous Peliſſon, known for his other performances, has written a defence of the unhappy Miniſter of ſtate, Fouquet, his friend and patron, which is eſteemed a piece of eloquence inferior to none in the French language. Read it together with his explanation of the inſtitutes of the Emperor Juſtinian, the beſt that was ever written, and containing an excellent collection of moral and political reflections.

If you can prevail on yourſelf to ſearch with patience into the maſs of law tracts and ſpeeches, with which France abounds at leaſt as much as England, you will meet with ſome excellent productions to repay your trouble.

Should you find yourſelf thus inclined, the interval between the death of Lewis the Thir-

Thirteenth, and the concluſion of the civil feuds during the minority of his ſon Lewis the Fourteenth, will furniſh you with the moſt intereſting materials.

In pulpit oratory the French have long made an illuſtrious figure. Bourdaloue, a Jeſuit, was the firſt who regulated and methodiſed the art of preaching. He is nervous and ſolid, and reaſons with great juſtneſs and dignity. He is the Tillotſon of France.

In the ſame line ſhines with great ſplendour, Maſſillon; whoſe ſermons many prefer to thoſe of the former, on account of his more intimate and practical knowledge of the polite world, and the leſs degree of auſterity contained in his doctrine.

You can ſurely dedicate a few ſpare hours to read ſuch of their ſermons as are upon ſubjects of a generally intereſting nature.

There

There is a ſpecies of pulpit oratory which has been more ſucceſsfully cultivated in France than in any other part of Chriſtendom, that of funeral orations. Nothing approaches the grandeur and magnificence of thoſe compoſed by Boſſuet and Flechier. A pathetic ſublimity of ſentiments reigns in both, conformable to the gravity of their ſubjects. Force of language, beauty of images, elevation of thought, richneſs and vivacity of deſcription, all conſpire to fill their readers with pleaſure and admiration. Doubtleſs you will be one, after ſuch an account of them; which is no more than ſtrict truth.

Of the academical orators I will only mention one, Porée; ſome of whoſe Latin orations have been tranſlated into French with as much correctneſs and elegance as in the language he wrote them. He is full of wit and beautiful ſentiments; and well deſerves your peruſal; were it only to give you an idea of that ſort of elo-

quence

quence which is the taſte of French univerſities.

I need not, I ſuppoſe, touch on the article of ſtage elocution. You will ſee enough of it to judge for yourſelf, beſides that it is of a nature to admit of no other judgment.

On the dexterity of the French in the art of ingratiating themſelves by the agreeableneſs of their converſation, enough has been already ſaid. I will only add, that you will find it no loſs of time, ſhould you ſtudy to imitate thoſe among them, whoſe excellence in this particular, you may have occaſion to obſerve. The way to imitate them is to frequent their company, and attend to their manner of diſcourſing. A footing of intimacy, and an earneſt deſire to profit by their example, will hardly fail of accompliſhing this aim; as we generally reſemble thoſe whom we eſteem, and with whom we continually aſſociate.

I will conclude this article by adviſing you to hear the beſt preachers and pleaders. It will prove, you may depend upon it, a very agreeable recreation. I ſpeak from experience. You will find the audiences of both compoſed of the moſt intelligent people; a proof that they are deſerving of your attention.

LETTER XVII.

I HAVE in a preceding epiſtle mentioned the progreſs that philoſophical ſtudies have made in France.

I will now give you a liſt of thoſe whom I think it your intereſt to peruſe. In this I intend to be conciſe, and to lead you no further into this province, than will prove of eſſential ſervice. Superfluity in theſe matters is of great diſſervice to a man who means to take an active part in the world.

I ſhall

I ſhall therefore reſtrain myſelf to thoſe who will powerfully contribute to the improvement of your mind, and to the neceſſary increaſe of your knowledge.

Neither ſhall I ſpeak of phyſical or mathematical writers. As you have acquired as much of thoſe branches, as it is your intention to be maſter of, I ſhall not needleſsly enter into an enumeration of the many uſeful performances of that kind that have been compoſed in France.

What I chiefly propoſe, is to lay before you thoſe productions which inveſtigate the operations of the mind, and cultivate the faculties of reaſoning; together with ſuch as teach us to examine with a philoſophic eye the various tranſactions in civil and moral life, and enable us to draw juſt concluſions from facts and occurrences; ſuch, in a word, as conduce to the formation of a ſolid ſyſtem of thinking and judging of what paſſes in the world.

Among the moſt uſeful publications in the laſt century, is that, entitled *l'Art de Penſer*. It is the beſt compendium of logick that ever was compoſed; clear, methodical, and though profound, remarkbly intelligible and entertaining. Set apart ſome portion of your time purpoſedly to give it a thorough and attentive reading.

Another book much anterior to this, but equally excellent in its kind, is *La Sageſſe*, by the famous Charron. It is an orderly and ſagacious deſcription of human nature, and of all that conſtitutes its happineſs or miſery. The language is obſolete; but full of life and energy. With the aſſiſtance of ſome of your French acquaintance, you will ſoon be able to comprehend it with eaſe.

You muſt not forget a cotemporary of Charron, the ſtill more famous Montagne. He is in the lively and facetious, what the other is in the ſerious and grave. In the multiplicity of ſubjects he treats of with

with ſo much wit, ſenſe, and learning, you will find a perpetual fund of amuſement as well as of inſtruction. Long has he been the delight of all intelligent readers; and I doubt not he will be yours.

La Bruiere and Rochefoucault I need hardly remind you of. You know their worth too well to be without them. The firſt has drawn pictures from the life with a truth and exactneſs that procured him the unanimous admiration of all who knew the originals.

The ſecond has depicted, with a diſcernment and energy that were never exceeded, the nature and operations of the human paſſions, their cauſes and effects, their dominion and tyranny over the heart and mind. This he does in ſo lively and agreeable a manner, that while he ſeems to have no other end than to amuſe, he conveys the moſt ſolid inſtruction.

The philoſophical works of Alembert, Diderot, Maupertuis, and Voltaire, claim your particular notice. They are worthy of the reputation of their authors; and treat of ſubjects highly intereſting to mankind.

Thoſe of Bayle are perhaps too voluminous to recommend to you for an entire peruſal at preſent. Keep him however in petto. The time will come when he will prove a ſource of the higheſt entertainment. With all his failings, he is a ſtriking proof, that wit, vivacity, and the talent of entertaining, are reconcilable with the moſt immenſe erudition.

Fontenelle is a writer with whom you muſt not neglect an acquaintance. Beſide his mathematical works, he has written a variety of others; out of which, ſelect for your reading, *Dialogues des Morts, Hiſtoire des Oracles, Eloges des Academiciens, Pluralité des Mondes.*

De

De l'Eſprit, by Helvetius, is an equally profound and agreeable explanation of the influence exerted over the minds of men by the various events and circumſtances of life. It is the natural hiſtory of the internal and intellectual faculties of mankind, as they are ſet in motion by the force of inclination, the power of education and prejudice, the concurrence of accidents, the caprice of fortune, and the torrent of the times.

The celebrity of Rouſſeau of Geneva, will undoubtedly engage you to read his works. He is in every reſpect an original. He thinks and writes alone, and props himſelf on no other man's doctrine or authority: his ideas and his arguments flow from his own mind; and you will have the ſatisfaction of knowing the opinions of one who borrows none, and who freely imparts without fear or favour, the notions he has formed of men and things. Doubtleſs he deals much in ſpeculation; but the

thoughts of ſo extraordinary a perſon will always deſerve weight. Having gone through a variety of ſcenes, and encountered many hardſhips in the courſe of his life, he muſt have ſeen much, and neceſſarily performed an active part on many occaſions. His lucubrations therefore may be reaſonably deemed equally the fruit of reflection and of experience.

I heſitated whether I ſhould, while ſpeaking of ſpeculative writers, mention two that are very eminent in the logical and metaphyſical claſs; Malbranche and Crouſas. The cauſe of my heſitation was my averſion to fatigue your mind with ſuch profound diſquiſitions. But as you have gone through Locke's Eſſay on the Underſtanding, I will not diſcourage a ſurvey of theſe. You will find Crouſas the moſt ſolid and ſatisfactory. Let theſe, however, be the *ne plus ultra* of ſuch abſtract ſtudies. I am no friend to them: they demand an uncommon ſhare of la-

bour; and after a great deal of toil, one is not properly repaid; as they leave us in the ſame ſtate of uncertainty in which they found us.

For theſe reaſons you ſhould be careful not to intangle yourſelf in purſuits of this kind: when begun, the very difficulties attending them are a ſpur to a ſtudious mind. We are loth to give over an attempt founded on a confidence in our capacity. Pride produces perſeverance; and perſeverance expence of time to no purpoſe. After much trouble, to uſe a vulgar but ſignificant expreſſion, we have nothing to ſhew for our pains. For what other name can we give to mere opinions combated by others; and which we have no more right to inſiſt upon, than opponents have on theirs.

I ſpeak experimentally on theſe matters. I wiſh you therefore to adopt the determination I have taken; to waſte no more

time in vain reſearches. There are things ſo inſcrutable in their nature, that the world ought long ſince to have ſtigmatized thoſe who inveſtigate them, as idlers, and authors of the detriment occaſioned by the miſemployment of abilities that might have been converted to purſuits of real and viſible utility.

LETTER XVIII.

IN the preſent epiſtle I intend to offer to your conſideration, ſuch miſcellaneous writings as come under no particular denomination, and can only therefore be claſſed in the general liſt of polite literature.

Rollin's *Belles Lettres* claim the firſt mention. A work tranſlated into all the languages of Europe.

A performance which has deſervedly met with a moſt gracious reception every where, is the *Lettres Perſannes*, by Monteſquieu.

It was his *Coup d'Eſſai*, his firſt trial of ſkill; and prepared the world to expect thoſe maſter-pieces that flowed afterwards from his pen.

The deſign of this work is obvious on peruſing the firſt pages. It procured him enemies among the narrow-minded; but all the ſenſible people in Europe were charmed with that ingenious review of the manners and notions of the times, and with thoſe inſtructive and well-founded ſtrictures, with which it is ſo judiciouſly interſperſed.

The principal production of this extraordinary genius is *L'eſprit des Loix*. It is inconteſtibly the nobleſt original in its kind that was ever produced by the wit of man. It has had the fate of all ſuch works, to be commended by the world at large, and attacked by envy, malice, and ignorance.

But

But there is no neceſſity for expatiating on a performance of which the vaſt utility is ſo widely acknowledged. Allowing that ſome faults may be found in it, they are but thinly ſcattered: its perfections will meet you in every page. You will be charmed with his ſtile, aſtoniſhed at his learning, and every where improved by the profound wiſdom of his obſervations.

Let this book be your conſtant companion. Meditate its contents, and conſult it on every occaſion, as you would do the inſtructions given you by authority.

Next perhaps in national utility to this immortal work, is that intitled *les Memoires de Sully*. The ground plot was prepared by that great miniſter; language and order have been added by the Abbé Delecluſe. You cannot prize it too much in its preſent form.

Mabli's

Mabli's *Droit public de l'Europe* will not improperly follow the peruſal of the laſt. It is a publication of great utility in the political world.

The French hold in high and juſt eſteem that performance of Dubos called *Reflections ſur la Poeſie, la Peinture, et la Muſique*. It is a learned, philoſophical, and truly curious diſſertation on each of theſe arts.

Madame de Sevigne's Letters are the moſt pleaſing account extant of the court of Lewis the Fourteenth. They are the completeſt models of the epiſtolary ſtile; full of elegance, vivacity, and politeneſs: no language affords a more entertaining collection: they will give you a complete idea of the ſtile of living, and manners of the people of rank in France during the laſt century.

Another cotemporary writer is peculiarly worthy of your notice. This is the famous

mous St. Evremont; who ſpent a great part of his life in our iſland, and enjoyed the good-will and eſteem of all the literati, as well as the people of faſhion, in his time, both in France and England. His ſtile and manner are that of a gentleman. He was well acquainted with all the great characters and tranſactions of his days, and has tranſmitted many of them to poſterity in maſterly colours. He has written on a variety of ſubjects, and diſplays every where the profoundneſs of a philoſopher, no leſs than the gaiety of a man of the world: he abounds with curious anecdotes; and is, on the whole, one of the moſt entertaining writers in the French language.

Among the French critics, let me remind you of Boſſu, and Bouhours: read the *Traité ſur le Poeme epique* of the firſt; and as much of the laſt as you can: no man writes purer French, nor with more taſte.

The

The works of Rapin the jeſuit may be claſſed with theirs, and deſerve no leſs your peruſal.

Of the many memoirs that abound in France, thoſe of Cardinal Derets, and of Gourville, hold the foremoſt rank. The Cardinal wrote as he lived, with force and grandeur, but with much irregularity. *Nil fuit unquam tam diſpar ſibi.*

Gourville is the preciſe contraſt. Cool, orderly, under an appearance of ſimplicity one diſcovers a man who meaſures every ſtep he takes, and weighs every word he ſpeaks; he never ſwerves from this rule; and you will find him conſtantly *qualis ab incepto.*

Permit me to conclude what I have already ſaid concerning Voltaire, by deſiring you to except none of his writings from your peruſal. Proſe or verſe, read them all, and you will read them more than once.

In

In this eulogium of Voltaire, and perhaps in the commendations given to ſome other French writers, it is not meant to recommend indiſcriminately every part or deſign of their writings; it is on the contrary much to be lamented, that an author ſo very eſteemable in other points, ſhould in religious reſpects be ſo dangerous, eſpecially to his young readers.

La Condamine's *Journal d'un Voyage a l'Amerique Eſpagnole*, together with his other travels. Le Blanc's *Lettres d'un François ſur les Anglois*, and moſt of the publications by the Marquis D'Argens, will afford you inſtruction and entertainment.

Add to theſe, Muralt's obſervations on the French and the Engliſh Nations, and upon travelling, a truly philoſophical performance.

Deſhoulieres, La Fayette, and Lambert, are three ladies who deſerve commemoration in this catalogue. The poetry of the firſt

is

is much eſteemed; the ſecond wrote the firſt ſenſible and elegant novels that ever appeared in France, *la Princeſſe de Cleves*, and *Zayde*; and the third diſtinguiſhed herſelf by ſeveral pieces written with great delicacy and judiciouſneſs.

Madame de Graffigny, author of *Lettres Peruviennes*, is not unworthy of their company.

Were I inclined to ſet before you all the French writers worthy of your peruſal, I ſhould ſwell this liſt to much larger dimenſions: but as I propoſe only to lead you to the acquaintance of the moſt neceſſary, uſeful, or entertaining, I think the preſent number will anſwer this end. If you can, within the compaſs of the time you intend to remain in France, read over even the principal of theſe, it will be an effort of application, of which few, if any of our modern young travellers, would willingly admit the idea.

To

To the books of amuſement above mentioned, let me, however, add two of rather a ſtudious complexion; but which you muſt not omit purchaſing, and often conſulting, if you ſeriouſly mean to make yourſelf that complete maſter of French, which you have often declared was your fixed determination.

Theſe two books are *la Grammaire Françoiſe* by Reſtaut, and *les Synonimes François* by Girard. They are the two performances of moſt ſolid utility for the perfect attainment of the grammatical purity, elegance, and preciſion, of the French language. The great pains taken by thoſe two gentlemen in the compoſition of their reſpective performances, are well known, and have not been loſt: they are clear, methodical, and copious without redundance; and may be propoſed as models to thoſe who in other nations are inclined to undertake works of the ſame nature, for the benefit of thoſe who ſtudy their language.

Re-

Reſtaut is excellent in his kind; but being tied down to the uſual form preſcribed in treating of grammatical matters, he will prove more inſtructive than amuſing: but Girard is a writer of a very peculiar claſs; in giving you the preciſe ſignification of words, he will at the ſame time furniſh you with a variety of ideas; many of them profound and philoſophical, and all of them beneficial and entertaining.

I will cloſe this epiſtle, by adviſing you to read the tranſlation of Quintus Curtius by Vaugelas in one hand, and the original in the other. I have found eſſential benefit by this method of ſtudying the French.

Do the ſame by Ablancour's Verſion of Cæſar's Commentaries, and of Tacitus. You will find no great labour in all this, but experience will ſoon teach you the utility reſulting from it.

LETTER XIX.

FRANCE is the country which firſt gave birth to thoſe periodical productions in the literary world, that afford a ſtated amuſement and inſtruction to the lovers and cultivators of learning.

Le Journal des Savans is the moſt ancient, and by numbers eſteemed ſuperior to the others in point of merit, as well as of antiquity.

Le Mercure de France followed it; but *non paſſibus æquis.*

Le Journal de Trevoux began with the preſent century. The Jeſuits had the conducting of it, till their final diſſolution, and acquitted themſelves highly to the ſatisfaction of the intelligent public.

Le

Le Journal de Verdun commenced much about the ſame period, and has always ſubſiſted with reputation.

Le Journal Oeconomique is of about forty years ſtanding; and has its ſhare of merit as well as the reſt.

I ſhould have told you, the two firſt made their appearance about the ſeventieth year of the laſt century.

The motive for making this enumeration, is that you may, at your leiſure hours, look occaſionally into each of them. They will ſerve to convey an adequate idea of the manner with which the French conduct undertakings of this nature.—They will at the ſame time enable you to form a compariſon between the merits of their literati thus employed and thoſe among ourſelves who follow the ſame occupation. But above all, it will empower you to take an extenſive view of the taſte

in learning and literature of the French nation at large. You will feel the pulſe of their preſent capacity and inclination for ſtudy: you will diſcover in what branches they chiefly delight: you will weigh in the ſureſt ſcale of compariſon the number of meritorious performances that appear in France and in England; and you will have a clear ſight of thoſe ſtudies which reſpectively preponderate in both nations.

This latter conſideration is of the higheſt importance to ſuch as make it their buſineſs to examine the different characters of people, in order to ſtrike the balance of their actual worth.

Nothing is more common than to appreciate nations by their former merits; but ſurely nothing is more erroneous and abſurd: all have had, or will have their days of ſplendour: to judge of what they are by what they have been, is not admiſſible,

ſible, therefore, according to the rule of ſound reaſon.

It happens very fortunately for the preſent times, that thoſe nations whom it is of moſt importance to know beſt, are the moſt forward to make themſelves known.

The French and the Engliſh, indiſputably the firſt nations upon earth, are continually employed in elucidating every thing that concerns them, and in laying before the world the whole ſyſtem of their proceedings. There is nothing ſo minute but what has undergone an inveſtigation; nothing ſo ſecret, but what has been brought to light. Their government, their politics, their trade and commerce, their national advantages or deficiencies, have all been expoſed to the univerſal view of their neighbours. All Europe indeed has ſo well profited by their endeavours to render themſelves noted, that their ſituation and circumſtances are as well known in other countries as in their own.

But while they have been ſo buſy in laying themſelves open to the public, they have been no leſs induſtrious in prying into the ſtate of others. There is no country in Europe, or rather in the four quarters of the globe, which they have not inſpected, and of which they have not deſcribed the peculiar excellencies and defects, and examined whatever had any reference to themſelves with the utmoſt acuteneſs and diligence.

From the rivality long ſubſiſting between theſe two nations, it is natural to infer that they have been eſpecially attentive to all that concerned each other.

Nothing accordingly deſerving of the leaſt notice has been omitted in this reciprocal inſpection. Virtues and vices, great and good qualities with their oppoſite blemiſhes, public tranſactions and private occurrences, events of the higheſt conſequence and matters of the leaſt, all have

have been examined and ſcrutiniſed on both ſides with ſurpriſing minuteneſs.

In a reviſal of this kind, ſuch things as were moſt acceſſible to their mutual curioſity, muſt of courſe have been ſubjected to the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny.

Among theſe the learning and literature of both people were the moſt ſuſceptible of diſcuſſion. Theſe are no where accounted *Arcana Imperii*, ſecrets of ſtate, improper to be divulged; on the contrary, they are held out as proofs to the world, of the merit and proſperity of thoſe nations where they flouriſh, and as motives to gain them eſteem and reſpect.

Every ſtep has therefore been taken to diſplay their eminence in theſe particulars. It has been ſaid, that in the triumphant days of the Roman empire, there were individuals employed in recording *Romanorum acta diurna*, the daily tranſactions of

the Romans. The ſpirit of ſuch an inſtitution has been completely fulfilled by the various compilers and examiners of all that is done, ſpoken, or written, in France or in England.

But the latter being the faireſt and cleareſt object of diſcuſſion, it has conſequently attracted the notice of the majority of ſpeculators in both countries.

Notwithſtanding the literary purſuits of a nation may not ſtrike at firſt, as leading to any material diſcoveries of its actual ſtate in points of importance, yet to the clear-ſighted, they will probably appear to contain very eſſential information. — Though they may not aſcertain the deſigns and proſpects of perſons in power, they ſhew what is of far greater weight, the temper, diſpoſition, abilities, and exertions of the bulk of a people. As it is on them the grandeur of a nation depends, their neighbours are deeply intereſted in the

the knowledge of what they are profecuting, or inclined and able to perform.

This knowledge may be obtained with great preciſion, by conſulting thoſe periodical productions, that take a general review of all that paſſes in the whole circle of arts and ſciences; in ſhort, throughout the extenſive empire of wit, ingenuity, and invention.

It is in this light that I have thought it very proper to recommend to your attention, the literary journals, and ſimilar performances, that will ſo often occur to your ſight: no depth of application will be neceſſary to make them ſubſervient to the purpoſes I have mentioned.

LETTER XX.

BESIDES the journals I have indicated in the preceding, there are a variety of others very much deſerving your no-

tice, and that will completely enable you to form a juſt and adequate idea of the turn and diſpoſition of the French, at preſent.

The moſt uſeful and popular of theſe periodical publications, is, in my opinion, *Le Journal politique et litteraire.* It contains the general news of all Europe, both political and literary, and is publiſhed thrice a month.

Le Journal de Paris is a minute and curious detail of what paſſes in that metropolis.

Le Journal eccleſiaſtique is an account of all things relating to the clergy, ſuch as preferments to benefices and dignities in the church, books publiſhed and opinions maintained, characters and anecdotes of eminent divines. It is in ſhort a chronicle of all daily occurrences in the eccleſiaſtical world. An occaſional glance at it,

from

from time to time, will give you proper notions of the policy of the French court, with regard to that immenſe body of men which compoſes the ſecular and regular clergy in France. It will alſo teach you what opinion to form of this claſs of individuals, not only in that kingdom, but in all the Roman Catholic countries.

Le Journal Encyclopedique is a regular account of ſcientific and uſeful performances, diſſertations, and inventions.

La Gazette univerſelle de Literature des Sciences et des Arts, publiſhed twice a week, is a repoſitory of real utility in the line it profeſſes.

La Gazette du Commerce is alſo publiſhed twice a week, and is of uſe to thoſe who are deſirous of ſpeculating in commercial affairs.

Le

Le Journal d'Agriculture is a monthly publication. Its object, which is the cultivation of land, is of late years become a favourite one over all France. There are at preſent, if I am rightly informed, upwards of thirty ſocieties in that kingdom, for the improvement and encouragement of agriculture, under the ſanction and patronage of royal authority.

I neither adviſe nor wiſh you to apply yourſelf in a particular manner to the peruſal of the performances above enumerated; but on the other hand, they deſerve your obſervation, eſpecially ſuch as have a reference to national objects. Periodical productions of this latter ſpecies you muſt not omit conſulting with attention: they will enrich your memory with eſſential information, and they will empower you to judge with ſolidity and diſcernment of the progreſs which the French are making in thoſe things, in which it behoves the Engliſh not to be ſurpaſſed, and, if poſſible, not equalled.

We

We cannot be too obſervant of the improvements taking place in that nation. Though by the laws of honour and humanity we are bound to eſteem and reſpect them for their many noble and excellent qualities, yet prudence directs us at the ſame time to caſt a watchful eye on all their proceedings. They are, it is true, a great and illuſtrious people; but they are no leſs a dangerous neighbour. They are our rivals in arts, in ſciences, in all that dignifies human nature, and renders nations famous; but they are likewiſe our ancient and inveterate enemies, ready to ſeize every opportunity to diminiſh our power, and reduce us to diſtreſs: their vigilance is equal to their enmity; and they have given conſtant proofs of their expertneſs in converting all our errors to our immediate and utmoſt detriment.

Such a people ſhould not be viſited by way of recreation. That is the laſt idea which Engliſh travellers ſhould admit of; but

but unhappily it is their firſt. Were France the country of our beſt friends and allies, we could not teſtify more ardour and partiality in its behalf.

After doing the French that juſtice which they deſerve, you will, I am confident, remember that you are an Engliſhman, and endeavour to preſerve yourſelf from the general contagion that infects our countrymen abroad, inattention to every thing but diverſions and amuſement.

It is principally from the well-founded conviction that ſuch is the diſpoſition of thoſe multitudes who run over to France, that the French are ſo willing to ſhew us every encouragement to viſit their country.

They know from inceſſant experience, that notwithſtanding the determinations adopted by our legiſlature, in order to diſcourage whatever tends to benefit France, the folly of individuals will always defeat the wiſdom of the ſtate.

Laws

Laws in this reſpect may be compared to a trumpet, which may ſound to battle, but does not inſpire men with courage to fight.

The French are perfectly convinced, that, as a nation, the Engliſh entertain as rooted an ill-will to their proſperity, as they do to ours: but then they are equally ſenſible, that men in their private capacity are entirely ruled by faſhion and caprice, and that public meaſures have no influence over the inclinations of people in their ordinary intercourſe.

Add to this the infatuation of the light and fantaſtic part of ſociety in this iſland, in their abſurd preference of French devices and inventions, not on account of their ſuperior propriety, but merely becauſe imported from France.

It is from the ridiculous propenſity to imitate that people, ſo common among us,

that every effort ſhould be made to reclaim thoſe who go among them.

The true and only method of compaſſing this deſirable end, would be to perſuade every young gentleman who propoſes to travel in that country, that he ſhould in ſome degree conſider himſelf as commiſſioned to take a view of an enemy's territory; that he ought therefore to examine its ſtrength and weakneſs, and loſe no occaſion to mark every advantage it poſſeſſes, and every defect under which it labours.

Were thoſe principles carefully inſtilled, our travellers would then go forth upon plans of inſpection and enquiry. Inſtead of returning home, fraught with the frivolities of the continent, they would employ their time and money in collecting that knowledge, and making thoſe obſervations, which would amply repay them for their trouble and expence.

LETTER XXI.

I WILL now take a ſurvey of thoſe inſtitutions, that have done ſo much honour to their founders, and proved of ſo much utility in the advancement of learning and literature.

Next to the foundation of univerſities, the moſt beneficial in the republic of letters, is that of academical ſocieties.

The French will tell you that Charlemagne was their firſt inſtitutor, and that he maintained in his palace, at a very liberal expence, a conſiderable number of the moſt learned and ingenious perſons of that age.

Without determining the preciſe manner which that great monarch and con-

queror adopted for thoſe laudable purpoſes, it will be ſufficient to acknowledge that he was one of the greateſt promoters and benefactors of learning; and that had his example been followed by his ſucceſſors, the ignorance of ſubſequent ages would have been obviated.

The miſeries and deſolations that afflicted France, during the courſe of two or three centuries after the demiſe of that celebrated Prince, left no room for the cultivation of learning.

After the elevation of the Capetian family on the throne, the internal quiet of the kingdom becoming leſs liable to interruption, letters begun to experience a more ſettled and regular cultivation: but it was not until the reign of Francis the Firſt that they flouriſhed with any diſtinguiſhed luſtre.

Lewis the Ninth, by the French ſtiled St. Lewis, had befriended them as much

as

as could be expected at that illiterate period, which was the middle of the thirteenth century; a time when all Europe was plunged in the abſurdities of what was called the Ariſtotelian Philoſophy.

That excellent Prince contributed by his private bounty, and public authority, to the eſtabliſhment of ſundry uſeful regulations in favour of learning. Among other foundations, he promoted that of the Sorbonne, the moſt famous divinity ſchool in Chriſtendom.

But it was reſerved to Francis to merit the title of Reſtorer of Literature. He was not only the patron of all kind of learning, but he cultivated ſome of the politer branches with particular predilection.

His munificence to literary men, and his zeal in promoting the liberal arts, gave a new turn to the French nation. A

taſte for polite knowledge became general among the upper claſſes; and they who before had bewildered their minds in the unintelligible ſophiſtry and jargon of the ſchools, applied themſelves to the uſeful and elegant ſtudy of the Greek and Roman authors.

From an application to theſe, they naturally proceeded to cultivate and poliſh their own language. It received conſiderable improvements during the period that laſted from the times of Francis, till thoſe of the civil wars on account of religion, which involved all France in ſcenes of blood and devaſtation for many years.

The pacification that enſued on the ſettlement of Henry the Fourth upon the throne, revived the ardour with which learning had been proſecuted. Being himſelf of a witty facetious diſpoſition, and expreſſing his thoughts with remarkable pointedneſs and energy, his courtiers

were, as uſual, emulous in the imitation of their maſter.

This of courſe effectually contibuted to improve the French language. We find accordingly in the works written from the commencement of the ſeventeenth century, to the epocha of Cardinal Richelieu's miniſtry, a gradual and perceptible alteration both in its words and phraſes, and even its grammatical conſtruction.

There are in France, as elſewhere, warm partiſans of all that ſavours of antiquity, *miranturque nihil niſi quod libitina ſacravit*, and who cannot prevail upon themſelves to admire the performances of men that have not been long ſince laid in their graves.

To ſuch individuals the above changes did not prove acceptable. They complained that nothing was gained by them

in perſpicuity and elegance, and that much was loſt in ſtrength and conciſeneſs.

The altercations that took place on this ſubject laſted a conſiderable time. They were carried on with much warmth on both ſides, and cannot be ſaid to have entirely ſubſided.

The favourers of the new methods of ſpeaking and writing, urged the propriety and neceſſity of poliſhing a language that had ſo long been uſed by an ignorant and illiterate people for the mere purpoſes of common intercourſe, and in which hardly any thing had been written of a ſcientific or liberal nature.

They quoted the precedent ſet to them by Francis the Firſt, who, in order to encourage the amelioration of the French language, had ordered it to be thenceforward employed in all public acts and deeds,

deeds, which had theretofore been written in Latin.

This had doubtleſs advanced the improvement of it which was thereby intended; but much remained yet to be done: the confuſions that had happened ſince the reign of that Prince, had retarded the progreſs he had ſo auſpiciouſly begun. Latin was ſtill in poſſeſſion of the pens of their beſt writers, from the ſuſpicion they entertained of the deficiency and inaptitude of the French tongue in the matters of which they treated. It was therefore incumbent on thoſe who were deſirous to ſee it employed by men of ſuperior abilities, to bring it to ſuch a ſtandard of purity and perfection as might induce them to make uſe of it.

The opponents of theſe innovations, as they called them, inſiſted on the other hand, upon the inutility of changing old words for new which were not more ex-

preſſive nor yet more harmonious: they contended for the ancient phraſes, as poſſeſſing equal clearneſs with thoſe that were ſubſtituted in their room, and not yielding to them in point of energy.

They cited at the ſame time ſeveral productions in vindication of their arguments. Among theſe were the writings of Amyot, Montagne, Charron, and divers others.

It was not an eaſy matter to refute people who came armed with ſuch authorities. Amyot's tranſlation of Plutarch's Lives, is deemed a maſter-piece in France even at this day: other tranſlations of that famous work have been attempted in French; but they fall infinitely ſhort of that done by Amyot.

The language of Montagne charms the readers of all nations from its livelineſs and agreeable ſimplicity. Ill would certainly betide any man who ſhould preſume to dreſs him

him up in modern French. I have heard that an eſſay was once made; but that the maker did not dare to produce it. This proves how much merit there is in the ſtyle of Montagne.

That of Charron is remarkable for the forcibleneſs with which it conveys the vaſt variety of ideas that abound in his excellent treatiſe on human wiſdom. No French writer diſplays a greater extent of thought, nor flow of language.

It would ill become any one but a native of France, conſummately verſed in that language, and who had given public acknowledged proofs of his ability, to aſſume the deciſion of ſo long and obſtinate a controverſy.

But as opinions may be ventured, provided they are delivered with modeſty, one may on this occaſion follow the example of Horace; in whoſe time the literati at Rome

Rome were ſplit into violent parties, reſpecting their ancient and modern writers.

That great critic, as well as poet, does not ſeem to have ſided with the antiquarian party. No man certainly knew better the merits and pretenſions of either ſide: yet as he evidently inclines to the moderns, we may reaſonably infer that the ſame motives which influenced his judgment, guided the ideas of the French critics, who in the like manner decided in favour of their modern againſt their ancient ſtile and phraſeology.

This deciſion does by no means detract from the excellence of thoſe who uſed it, any more than that of Horace did from the real deſerts of the old Roman authors. Both the deciſions go no further than to affirm truths that cannot impartially be contradicted. As the writers to whom he gave the preference ſoon obtained it from the generality of people, ſo have the variations

tions introduced into the French language, given it, in the opinion of moſt perſons, a manifeſt ſuperiority over that of preceding times.

A corroboration of the ſoundneſs of Horace's judgment, is that at the diſtance of eighteen centuries, the learned world as unanimouſly coincides with it, as it has done during the whole duration of that long ſpace.

This could not happen through partiality: nothing but conviction of the rectitude of his ideas could prevail upon mankind to eſpouſe them.

In the ſame manner all Europe has long ſince joined iſſue with France, in allowing its language to be highly improved in a variety of reſpects, in compariſon of what it was at the commencement of the laſt century.

When

When the forecited authors are therefore adduced, as equal in the beauty of their diction to any of thoſe that have ſince appeared, the anſwer is, that they carried the powers of language as far as it was poſſible for their time; but ſtill would have ſhone more conſpicuouſly, had it poſſeſſed the ſame degree of elegance and refinement as at this day.

Hence it may be ſaid, that what we admire in them, is not their language, ſo much as their manner of uſing it. Like an indifferent utenſil in the hands of a ſkilful artiſt, it executes great things; but would have executed ſtill greater, had it been more complete.

Theſe diſcuſſions employed much of the attention of the literati, when Cardinal Richelieu began to act that part in the world, which has rendered his name ſo famous. As he aſpired at all kind of glory, he reſolved to obtain the reputation of

of being the greateſt protector of literature in his age.

Full of this determination, he openly eſpouſed the cauſe of thoſe who contended for the neceſſity of improving the French language, and conceived the project of founding a ſociety for this purpoſe.

To this was owing the inſtitution of the *Academie Françoiſe*, as it is denominated, a ſociety of individuals who make it their duty and buſineſs to exerciſe their abilities in perfecting and maintaining the purity, and the true ſtandard of the French language.

Its inſtitution took place in the year one thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-five: an epocha when Cardinal Richelieu was at the zenith of his power, when he had ſubdued faction at home, and was extending the influence and reputation of France over all Europe.

It

It conſiſts of forty members; which number was never augmented. They are always perſons of indiſputable merit in ſome, and often in many branches of literature.

To ſpeak with juſtice of this celebrated ſociety, it has always been compoſed of the moſt illuſtrious writers in France. Almoſt all the famous names that have rendered the age of Lewis the Fourteenth ſo conſpicuous, have belonged to it.

There is no aſſociation of the kind, containing ſuch a number of perſons of the firſt rank. I have ſeen a liſt, wherein among the fellows for the time being, I counted two Marſhals of France, both of them Dukes, three other Dukes, one Cardinal, one Archbiſhop, and four Biſhops, beſide other perſons of high rank in church and ſtate.

Cardinal

Cardinal Richelieu's intention has been fully anſwered by this happy mixture of ranks. Knowing that merit without patronage ſtands no chance of being rewarded, he wiſely ordained that a conſiderable proportion of the academy ſhould, if poſſible, conſiſt of individuals of quality. In this he had two motives in view; to promote an application to letters among the upper claſſes, and to procure a ſufficient number of protectors to literary men.

The King is their immediate patron, and no inefficient one. A decent penſion is ſettled upon every member that is ſuppoſed to need one; and ſuch as manifeſt an aptitude for political employments, ſeldom are neglected.

In order to render their ſituation and buſineſs reſpectable, an apartment is aſſigned them in the Louvre; where they hold their meetings, and are often honoured with the preſence of the firſt characters in the

the ſtate, and with the viſits of the firſt perſonages in Europe.

To ſhow at the ſame time that all men are equal in the republic of letters, and that merit alone has a right of conferring diſtinctions, a Preſident is annually choſen by plurality of votes, to whom the title of director is given, and who has the chief management during that time.

The regulations concerning this academy are too many for an epiſtolary notice: be careful however to obtain a ſight of them. As they were drawn up by men of genius, they cannot but contain many particulars worthy of your knowledge. Some of them will poſſibly appear unneceſſary, and even frivolous; but there were reaſons for them, which, upon inveſtigation, may not prove altogether ſo deſerving of cenſure, as it has frequently been ſurmiſed.

LETTER XXII.

THE literary ſociety next in point of ſeniority, is that intitled *l'Academie Royale des Inſcriptions et Belles Lettres.*

The purpoſe of its inſtitution, is to cultivate polite literature in all its various branches; to explain and elucidate the dark and difficult paſſages in ancient authors, and the inſcriptions upon monuments; to examine the remains of learned antiquity, and to perpetuate the memory of great national events by medals, emblematic devices, and public inſcriptions.

The number of members belonging to this ſociety is about ſixty. They are divided into three claſſes, honorary, penſioners, and aſſociates.

The firſt are all perſons of high diſtinction, Miniſters of ſtate, Dukes, Biſhops, and other great dignitaries.

The ſecond are men of noted eminence for their learning and genius, uſually indeed the firſt of the kingdom in their different lines.

The third cannot be ſaid to differ from the ſecond in any thing but rank, appellation, and ſalary: in ſubſtantial merit they are much the ſame.

Beſides theſe, there are veteran aſſociates. Theſe are gentlemen whoſe age is ſuppoſed to preclude and abſolve them from any further labour in the field of literature, and who are intitled by the merits of their former years to enjoy both reſt and remuneration. The celebrated Fontenelle, who lived to the age of a hundred, was one of this venerable claſs.

There are alſo members of this academy under other denominations; but the former only can be ſtrictly deemed of that body.

The date of its inſtitution was in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-three, under the miniſtry and auſpices of the famous Colbert.

Influenced by the example of Cardinal Richelieu, and the inſtigation of the illuſtrious Seguier, Chancellor of France, and a warm friend to literature, he availed himſelf of his maſter's propenſity to ſignalize his reign by remarkable tranſactions, to infuſe into his mind the ſalutary idea of emulating ſuch of his predeceſſors as had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their patronage of learning.

As Lewis the Fourteenth was a Prince ambitious of every kind of praiſe, he was readily induced to embrace a propoſal

that flattered his diſpoſition in ſo agreeable a manner.

Three years after the inſtitution of this academy, he founded another, well known in the literary world under the name of *L'Academie des Sciences.*

The object of this ſociety is to cultivate and improve natural philoſophy, mathematical, and mechanical knowledge, phyſic, ſurgery, and anatomy, chymiſtry and botany, whatever in ſhort relates to the ſtudy and ſcience of nature.

The members of this ſociety are diſtinguiſhed by four denominations, honorary, penſioners, aſſociates, and pupils.

The firſt are all perſonages of the firſt diſtinction in the kingdom, and are looked upon as the friends and protectors of the inſtitution, and of thoſe who compoſe it.

The

The ſecond are the efficient and acting members, and muſt reſide at Paris, in order to attend the buſineſs of the inſtitution.

The third are much in the ſame predicament, with this difference, however, that eight of them may be foreigners, and remain in their reſpective countries.

The fourth, like the ſecond, muſt every one be ſettled at Paris, and are expected to give punctual attendance at the ſtated meetings of the ſociety.

The King appoints yearly a Preſident, and has the nomination of the Secretary and Treaſurer, both which places are for life, as is alſo the Secretaryſhip of the Academy of Inſcriptions and Belles Lettres, and that of the French Academy.

Both theſe ſocieties have an apartment in the Louvre for their meetings, as well as the French Academy.

The academy of ſciences has alſo its veteran members. The illuſtrious Fontenelle had the honour of being on this liſt, as well as on that of the academy of inſcriptions.

You will readily perceive that the academy of ſciences is the moſt uſeful of theſe ſocieties, and the moſt beneficial to ſociety at large.

For this reaſon the French have, in imitation of that at Paris, eſtabliſhed ſeveral others in the principal cities throughout the kingdom.

Thoſe that have come to my knowledge are the following: the academies of Rouen and Caen in Normandy, of Nancy in Lorain, of Marſeilles in Provence, of Toulouſe and Nimes in Languedoc, of Dijon in Burgundy, of Lyons in the Lyonnois, of Bourdeaux in Gaſcony, of Rochelle in Aunis, of Arras in Artois.

Beſides theſe, there are others which I do not recollect. The number of them all together amounts to twenty, if not more. They are unequivocal proofs how much the French are addicted to learning and literature.

LETTER XXIII.

BESIDES the academies already enumerated, there are three others deſerving of mention.

That of ſurgery, which I name the firſt on account of its evident utility. It was inſtituted in one thouſand ſeven hundred and thirty, and is certainly as uſeful an eſtabliſhment as any during the late king's reign.

It conſiſts of ſixty members, all of prime eminence in their profeſſion. You will obſerve that the French pride themſelves

greatly for the progreſs and improvements they have made in this art. They eſteem themſelves indeed the firſt who brought it to any degree of perfection.

It muſt be acknowledged, that their claim is juſtly founded. Whatever may be the preſent merit of the Engliſh, or of other nations, in this neceſſary branch, France undoubtedly led the way in moſt of the ameliorations it has received, and in the fabrication of moſt of the numerous inſtruments it employs in its many operations. None, it is ſaid, were made in England, before the time of the late Cheſelden, reputed the firſt ſurgeon among the Engliſh in his day.

Surgery in France is on a reſpectable and ſcientific footing. None are admitted to practice without a competency of liberal ſcholarſhip. They muſt have attained the degree of maſter of arts, and undergone a public examination of their abilities.

It

It were to be wiſhed that in this particular, an imitation of what is done in France were adopted by thoſe that follow that profeſſion in England.

The next academy in point of utility, is that of architecture, eſtabliſhed in the ſeventy-firſt year of the laſt century, at a time when France was at the higheſt period of its glory, and arts and ſciences met with every kind of encouragement from the miniſtry of Lewis the Fourteenth.

This academy is compoſed of about thirty members, divided in two claſſes, between which however there is no material diſtinction.

The gentlemen of whom this academy conſiſts meet in the Louvre, and have in general the care and inſpection of the royal houſes and palaces. Moſt of them are very eminent in their art, and they muſt all have given proofs of their capacity either

either in France or in other countries, this being indeed a condition of their admittance.

The French however excel moſt in military, and naval architecture. A numerous liſt is continually occupied in the ſtudy of means to give them reſpectively all the degree of perfection of which they are ſuſceptible. I have heard judicious and knowing Frenchmen aſſert, that the flouriſhing ſtate the French marine was brought to, in ſo ſhort a ſpace after the late peace of Aix la Chapelle, was owing much leſs to the ſums expended on it, than to the ingenious management and contrivances of thoſe whoſe talents for ſuch purpoſes were properly noticed by the perſons intruſted with the important charge of forming a navy. Thus much is certain, that France produces the beſt engineers, and as ſkilful ſhip-builders as any country in Europe.

I now

I now come to the academy of painting, ſculpture and engraving, inſtituted in one thouſand ſix hundred, and forty-eight.

This academy conſiſts of upwards of an hundred members. Twenty of them are honorary, about fifty are painters, and the remainder ſculptors and engravers.

From the fondneſs of the French people of faſhion for magnificence and decoration, and no leſs from the genius of the Roman Catholic religion, full of ornament and of ſhew, conſtant and profitable employment is found for moſt of the artiſts that excel in thoſe branches.

It cannot be denied that they flouriſh in France with as much, if not more luſtre than in any part of Europe. The liſt of French painters, ſculptors, and engravers, for more than a century paſt, will afford a number of names equal to thoſe of any nation during that period, and, in the opinion

opinion of many, not Frenchmen but foreigners, far ſuperior.

Acknowledging myſelf no connoiſſeur in theſe matters, I reſign you entirely to the guidance and inſtruction of thoſe who are. You will find enough at Paris. To them I will leave the care of ſhewing and explaining to you the beauties of the many pictures, ſtatues, ſculptures, and engravings, that abound in France, as much as in any country in Chriſtendom, both in churches and public edifices, and in the houſes and private collections of individuals.

I ſhall only add, that no people diſplay more willingneſs to exhibit their ſtores of this kind than the French, eſpecially to foreigners. They conſider themſelves as bound in a particular manner to ſatisfy the curioſity of ſuch as viſit France.—Looking upon theſe exhibitions of their artiſts, as proofs of the ſuperior ingenuity

nuity of the natives, they are desirous you should carry away with you an ocular conviction how much they excel all other people.

You will soon discover this propensity of the French to rank themselves foremost in this as in every other list. They will indeed allow the Italians to have been the revivers of these fine arts, and even to have produced the noblest specimens of modern genius. But that æra of Italian perfection, they now say, is no more; France is the country which has inherited it, and where all those arts appear at present in greatest splendour.

As you will find frequent opportunities at Paris, of conversing with intelligent foreigners of all countries, you may consult them on these pretensions of the French. Notwithstanding the partiality with which almost every man espouses the cause of his nation, you will be fully able to gather

gather from their reſpective judgments on theſe ſubjects, a ſufficiency of materials out of which to form your own.

I will finiſh this epiſtle by adviſing you, while your attention is employed on theſe objects, to read Freſnoy's Latin Poem on the Art of Painting. The univerſal eſteem it has ſo long enjoyed, is a ſufficient recommendation.

Another poetical performance in the ſame language upon ſculpture, has been written by Droueſſin a Jeſuit. It met with a very favourable reception from the public, and well deſerves your peruſal.

LETTER XXIV.

I SHOULD have told you that an eaſy acceſs may be procured to the academies I have been deſcribing, on their ſtated

ſtated days of meeting, for any perſons of genteel rank and character.

After viſiting theſe, one of the moſt entertaining paſtimes in the literary line, is the liberty allowed to all individuals of decent appearance, of entering at pleaſure, as often as they think proper, a conſiderable number of rich and magnificent libraries, very juſtly for that reaſon known by the appellation of public.

The firſt on every account is that called the king's library. It is a noble and ſpacious building, containing a number of large and elegant rooms, wherein are depoſited near eight hundred thouſand volumes of print, and upwards of ſixty thouſand volumes of manuſcripts in every language that is written.

This library is of long ſtanding; but the time when a royal collection of books was firſt made in the Louvre, has not yet been aſcertained.

A royal

A royal library ſubſiſted in the reign of Charles the Fifth, ſurnamed the Wiſe. It conſiſted of about nine hundred volumes, a noble collection for that time.

As the art of printing was not diſcovered till a hundred years after, they were all manuſcripts, and from the rarity of books in that age, it was with much difficulty they had been collected.

The contents of this library would at preſent appear very paultry. It was chiefly made up of French and Latin bibles, maſs books, breviaries, pſalteries, and the like. They were richly bound, and curiouſly ornamented with figures coloured and gilt in the taſte of thoſe times.

Beſides the above, there were a few of the ancient fathers of the primitive church. But to compenſate for the deficiency in this article, there was a good quantity of legends, and lives of ſaints male and female.

Of books of learning and literature the number was inconſiderable. There were ſome treatiſes on geometry, but many more on judicial aſtrology, and other methods of divination, which were ſciences highly in vogue at that æra, as they always are in proportion to human ignorance and imbecility.

There were alſo numerous treatiſes of phyſic, moſtly French or Latin tranſlations from Arabian authors, a great many hiſtorians of the Gothic ages, but a far greater proportion of romances in proſe and rhime, with ſome writers on law and juriſprudence.

The moſt capital defect was the very ſmall number of claſſics: there were only three of the old Latin poets, Ovid, Lucan, and Boetius, if this latter may be accounted a claſſic.

Of thoſe authors in proſe, who figured in the days of Roman eloquence, there were but few: of Cicero in particular there was not a ſingle copy.

From this review one may judge of the taſte of thoſe who were employed in the formation of this library, unleſs we are to ſuppoſe, what may poſſibly have been the caſe, that no other books could be procured.

I cannot refrain on this occaſion from reflecting on the immenſe diſparity between the knowledge and literature of this period, which was about the middle of the fourteenth century, and the flouriſhing ſtate in which they were among the Greeks, about three hundred years before the Chriſtian æra.

If you will be at the pains of comparing the reſpective characters of Charles the Fifth of France, and of Ptolomy Philadelphus

ladelphus King of Egypt, you will find a remarkable likeneſs in their love of learning, and reſpect for learned men. Had Charles lived in a more enlightened age, he would probably have been an excellent ſcholar. It is recorded of him, that in the midſt of the weightieſt buſineſs, he dedicated conſtantly a portion of each day to the improvement of his mind by reading and ſtudy.

Yet with all his efforts, and with an expence that was conſiderable for the time, it appears that he was not able to collect a thouſand volumes to compoſe his library.

How different was the ſucceſs of the Egyptian prince, when he undertook to compile a royal library! Inſtead of one ſingle thouſand, procured with infinite trouble, he was able to furniſh the ſumptuous edifice he had erected for that pur-

poſe, with between two and three hundred thouſand volumes.

Leaving you to ponder on the cauſes of the prodigious difference between theſe two epochas, I ſhall proceed to counſel you to make uſe of the opportunities you will have in your viſits to this library, to examine with due attention the great variety of remarkable books and manuſcripts it contains.

I do not mean that you ſhould read them. That were impoſſible. But it is by no means impracticable to take a curſory ſurvey of the principal, according to the order of time they were written.

The number of excellent performances, and I only ſpeak of ſuch, is very moderate. By ſurveying them in the manner I have recommended, you will obtain a chronological knowledge, as it were, of the progreſs and improvement of the human

man mind, and be able to judge of the reſpective abilities of nations in different ages.

This advice I hope you will not neglect. You will never be able to follow it to greater advantage than on the ſpot in queſtion. You may repair to it twice a week, and oftener, if you chuſe to aſk permiſſion.

My intention however is not to convert you into an *Helluo Librorum*. A devourer of books, like a devourer of victuals, ſeldom can digeſt them. I therefore repeat the caution I have already mentioned; let none but the beſt claim your attention in the propoſed review; and then you may be ſure it will not be burthened with too many.

Beſides the printed books and manuſcripts, you will find there a moſt ſuperb

collection of medals and other antiques. In the reviſal of theſe, aſſociate if you can with ſome learned acquaintance, otherwiſe you will only ſee them by halves, and carry away but a ſmall ſhare of their utility and merit.

Forget not the cabinet of prints, and of miniature paintings on vellum, of animals and plants to the number of ſix or ſeven thouſand. Here too you ſhould be accompanied by a connoiſſeur, to enjoy theſe ſights properly.

To go through all this may ſeem a laborious taſk: but if you regulate your time judiciouſly, and adhere punctually to the regulation you make, it will not only ſeem, but prove in reality a mere paſtime.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

I HAVE dwelt on the royal library ſomewhat circumſtantially becauſe it is certainly one of the completeſt and moſt uſeful in Europe, if indeed it may not altogether challenge the preference over any.

The next public library in point of richneſs and utility, is that of the abbey of *St. Germains des Prés*, ſo called from its former ſituation before the enlargement of Paris.

It is in the poſſeſſion of the Benedictine order, the moſt ancient, the moſt wealthy, and what is much more to its honour, the moſt learned in all France.

You will not do amiſs in forming a literary connection with ſome of the conventuals of this abbey. Should you be

deſirous to viſit any of the moſt noted monaſteries and religious houſes, you will find them extremely ready to oblige you with letters of recommendation, and theſe you will experience to be highly ſerviceable in more than one reſpect.

The library of this abbey is open every day of the week. It abounds with magnificent editions of the Greek and Latin fathers of the church, and with a large quantity of manuſcripts written during the Gothic ages. I mention theſe in particular, becauſe you will find them no where elſe in ſuch good order and ſuch high preſervation.

I need not remind you of the great obligations which the learned world is under to the Benedictine order. To the extraordinary care and diligence with which they tranſcribed the works of ancient authors, at a time when printing was unknown, and writing no ordinary accompliſh-

compliſhment, we are in a great meaſure indebted for the renovation of polite literature.

Beſides a variety of books on all ſubjects, in addition to thoſe already obſerved, this library poſſeſſes ſome very fine pictures, highly eſteemed by good judges, together with a noble collection of medals and antiques, and another of natural curioſities.

The other public libraries are thoſe of the Abbey of St. Victor, occupied by Canons regular; an inſtitution by ſome aſcribed to St. Auguſtin, Biſhop of Hippone, a place not far from Carthage; in which caſe they would be more ancient than the Benedictines, by near a century, as that celebrated Biſhop flouriſhed not far from the middle of the fifth century, and the others were not inſtituted till near the middle of the next.

The library of this abbey is well ſupplied with all kind of books, and is continually

nually increaſing from the funds aſſigned to that intent. The conventuals are polite and well-bred men, ſeveral of them extremely converſant in the world, and abundantly civil to thoſe who are introduced to their acquaintance.

The famous Santeuil was of this abbey. He was an original in his character and manners; but ſtill more for his prodigious talent in Latin poetry. He compoſed a collection of hymns, which are now uſed almoſt univerſally in France; they are full of elegance and ſublimity; you will find them thoroughly ſuited to the occaſions for which they were intended. Were I inclined to make a compariſon, I would call Santeuil the Buchanan of France.

The Abbey of St. Genevieve, poſſeſſed alſo by Canons regular, has another public library full of choice and excellent books, with a noble collection of antiques and natural rarities.

But

But what peculiarly diſtinguiſhes it, is a curious ſeries of ancient golden coins and medals. They are the gift of the late Duke of Orleans, a Prince of great learning and ſanctity of life. He choſe this abbey for his abode in his latter years, and ſpent his time in continual ſtudy and devotion. I have heard ſuch accounts of his manner of living, as will often rather ſurpriſe than edify thinking people. He was a prodigy of penitence and auſterity: he denied himſelf every comfort of life, and ſeemed to conſider his exiſtence chiefly as the means of perpetual mortification.

You will naturally aſk what he had done to condemn himſelf to ſo much penance and ſelf-denial; but that is a queſtion which may be rationally propoſed to many others as well as him. The fact is, that they who lead ſuch wretched lives, are uſually perſons who have the leaſt to anſwer for.

Exceſſes

Exceſſes of this kind are much more frequent in Roman Catholic than in Proteſtant countries. It is a great pity that worthy and reſpectable individuals ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be lead away by ſuch unreaſonable and groundleſs ideas of religious perfection: I make no doubt that premature death has oftener than noticed, been the conſequence of ſo erroneous a conduct. Such characters ought to be reminded of the ſaying, *ſapias ad ſobrietatem.*

This Abbey of St. Genevieve has produced ſeveral men of great learning and abilities; the celebrated Boſſu, author of the treatiſe on epic poetry, was one.

There is a very large library belonging to the Advocates and gentlemen of the law. Beſide books on other ſubjects, it is the beſt repoſitory for thoſe who wiſh to become well acquainted with the feudal law, and with the ſyſtem of juriſprudence that prevailed

vailed in the Gothic times. Among a variety of tracts upon theſe ſubjects, you will ſelect the beſt, and examine thoſe parts that will ſtrike you as moſt deſerving of knowledge. You will eaſily find ſome one to direct your choice. I met formerly with ſuch a work in French; but I forget the title and the writer: it was a quarto cloſe printed, the language elegant French, and the matter entertaining, conſidering the ſubject: it was written about the cloſe of the laſt, or the commencement of this century. Theſe are the ſole indications that I now recollect.

There is in the *Maiſon de la Doctrine Chretienne*, a very conſiderable library open to the public. Among other works it is remarkable for its abundance of excellent editions of hiſtorians, chiefly thoſe of antiquity. The gentlemen of this houſe are ſecular Prieſts, who live in a collegial manner, and are noted for their learning and regularity.

The *Hotel de Ville*, that is to ſay the Guildhall of Paris, is alſo in poſſeſſion of a library for the uſe of the public. It is kept in a ſpacious houſe formerly belonging to the Jeſuits, and contains a very large number of books in exceeding good order, and chiefly French.

The college founded by Cardinal Mazarin, and ſtiled *Le College des Quatre Nations*, is endowed with a very numerous library of excellent books.

This famous Miniſter had little or no learning; but much of natural wit and readineſs of thought. He erected this college and library in compliance with the example of his predeceſſor in the Miniſtry, Cardinal Richelieu. As the munificence of this latter had won him the praiſes and attachment of the literary world, Mazarin hoped to procure himſelf by the ſame means the favour of that claſs of ſociety, and to atone thereby in ſome meaſure, for the

the illaudable ways and means he had uſed in the amaſſing of the immenſe riches, which expoſed him to ſo much reproach.

To all the fore-mentioned libraries, individuals of genteel appearance are admitted on ſtated days of the week. Herein the convenience of the public has been ſo judiciouſly conſulted, that you are ſure of admiſſion every day to one or more.

The intention in granting this acceſs to the public at large, ſeems not ſo much to furniſh them with books to read, as to enable ſtudious perſons to examine and tranſcribe paſſages out of ſuch as they cannot otherwiſe procure. Another uſeful purpoſe is, that by inſpecting theſe libraries, people are directed what books are principally deſerving of their attention and peruſal.

But beſide theſe libraries, there are ſeveral others; to which, though not pro-

feſſedly public, entrance is never denied to men of letters, and perſons of any character.

Among theſe, that of the Sorbonne holds the firſt place. It is noted for a very conſiderable number of ancient manuſcripts, and is well ſtocked with books of divinity, compoſed by people of all perſuaſions.

The Doctors of the houſe and ſociety of Sorbonne, as they are denominated, form a very learned and reſpectable body. It is the moſt ancient of all theological inſtitutions. Its authority in caſes and diſcuſſions of this nature, is almoſt ſupreme in France, and very great in all countries profeſſing the Roman Catholic religion.

There is another ſociety of Doctors in divinity, not ſo ancient nor conſiderable, but which has nevertheleſs produced many perſons of extraordinary merit in that line. It is ſtiled the Society of Navarre, and

was

was founded in the ſixteenth century by the royal family of that name, which afterwards acceded to the throne of France in the perſon of Henry the Fourth.

They too are in poſſeſſion of a very fine library, full of old manuſcripts, and no leſs noted for a large and curious collection of thoſe editions of ancient authors that firſt came out on the invention of printing.

A ſociety known by the name of *Congregation de l'Oratoire* poſſeſſes a very numerous library, containing among other literary curioſities, a valuable collection of manuſcripts in the eaſtern languages.

The members of this ſociety are in high reputation for their proficiency in ſciences and literature. Characters of the firſt eminence in theſe reſpects have belonged and ſtill belong to this body. It is compoſed of ſecular clergymen, who differ no other-

wiſe from others of the ſame denomination, than by living together in a conventual manner, and purſuing a ſtricter courſe of ſtudies.

The library of the Celeſtins is a very numerous one, and remarkable for a large quantity of manuſcripts written in the Gothic ages.

The Celeſtins are a Monaſtic inſtitution: its firſt appearance was about the latter end of the thirteenth, or beginning of the fourteenth century: their rules and manner of living are much like the generality of other religious orders.

The library of the Convent of Dominicans, ſituated in the *Rue St. Honoré*, is noted for its excellent collection of Arabian, Turkiſh, and Perſian manuſcripts, and has alſo a curious aſſortment of natural curioſities.

The

The Dominicans ſeem to be a medium between the ſtrict monaſtic orders, and the ſecular clergy: their life is leſs recluſe, and they mix more in ſociety; the chief purport of their inſtitution being to preach and inſtruct.

I have now gone through the beſt libraries that I can recollect. See them all, but not in a formal pedantic manner. I have known ſome perſons ſo abſurdly devoted to their contemplation, as to ſpend the beſt part of their time in looking over every book they contained: I know not with what intent, unleſs from the ſilly vanity of being able to ſay that they had ſeen them all. But even this was next to impoſſible conſidering their prodigious number. One thing however is certain, that no profit can be reaped from the ſuperficial review of meer title pages, which is the utmoſt that can be done by thoſe who take the ridiculous reſolution of looking at them all.

The right method of proceeding in this immenſe laybrinth, is to reſolve beforehand upon what branches to fix your attention. In every library a particular place is allotted to them: when you are in it, remember the precept, *lege ſed elige*.

By adhering to this rule, a ſelection is ſoon made of what is really worth peruſing. It is not aſſuredly by vaſt reading that great geniuſes are formed, or even much ſolid learning acquired. Books are frequently, if not moſt commonly, a repetition of each other: they often ſerve to confuſe and perplex, inſtead of affording elucidation.

How many things are there, which not to know, is, in the words of Pope, a praiſe: beware how you indulge curioſity; it is a more pernicious paſſion in thoſe who are covetous of knowledge than they are uſually aware of: unleſs a perſon poſſeſſes not only ſtrong intellects, but a ſtrong conſtitu-

conſtitution too, an extenſive application to reading and ſtudy, will fatigue more than improve, and by impairing the laſt will certainly affect the firſt.

Endeavour therefore to make learning as much as poſſible an object of amuſement and pleaſure: this you will compaſs without much difficulty, provided you apply yourſelf only to what ſuits your capacity; a few trials will ſoon decide which way it lies; when you have made this diſcovery, be ſatisfied with the talents allotted you; *non omnia poſſumus omnes.*

It is by purſuing the path pointed out by this auſpicious diſcovery, that men of genius have acquired all their fame. The vulgar proverb ſays with great truth, that what is labour to one man is play to another. Conformably to this, when our faculties are employed in a proper direction, we proceed with ſmoothneſs and eaſe: it is only by ſtriving to force nature, that we involve ourſelves in difficulties.

Do you imagine that Locke or Newton did not derive much pleaſure from the purſuit of their reſpective lucubrations? abſtruſe and profound as they appear, and are to the generality of men, they were to them like the even ſurface of the ſea, over which the propitious gales of their ſuperior genius wafted them without perplexity or ſtorms.

A great proportion of the recompence of men endowed with uncommon parts, is that ſatisfaction which accrues from their very exertion. You will invariably obſerve that the talent in which they excel, not only commands their warmeſt attention, but exerciſes an attraction which they prize beyond every other enjoyment.

This perhaps is more conſpicuous in men of literary genius than in any others. We ſee them at all times enamoured with the objects of their reſpective purſuits, in a manner that fully convinces how highly

they value them, and what delight they receive from their profecution.

To the fore-mentioned inſtance of our two celebrated countrymen, may be added that of two late geniuſes not leſs famous, Rouſſeau and Voltaire. Their attachment to letters was ſuch, that the life of both may be ſaid to have been ſpent in their ſervice. They died as it were with a pen in their hands, eſpecially the latter, whoſe end was abſolutely accelerated by the fatigue he underwent in the perfecting of his laſt dramatic piece, working at it day and night, at the age of eighty-four, with the ſame aſſiduity and indefatigableneſs as if he were no more than thirty.

Neither of theſe illuſtrious writers were compelled by neceſſity to exerciſe that inceſſant application for which they were both ſo remarkable. Voltaire was rich; and ſo might Rouſſeau have been had he choſen. It was pure inclination and choice

that led them to devote themſelves to continual ſtudy: the pleaſure they found in it, repaid them amply for the neglect of what might ſeem to others, much more conducive to recreation and enjoyment.

Summon therefore all your attention, and dive as it were to the bottom of your diſpoſition, in order to find out for what nature has deſigned you: to know that is of the higheſt conſequence for your welfare, ſince on that knowledge depends contentment and ſerenity of mind, without which, no happineſs can be attained.

Should your option prove erroneous, it is not in the power of human efforts to ſecond it. Talents, unleſs directed to their proper object, are uſeleſs, and only occaſion loſs of time and labour. Until you have explored the province in which you are to act, you will appear to diſadvantage, and will neceſſarily be diſpleaſed with a ſituation, wherein, as you can make no figure, you will experience no ſatisfaction.

But

But the worſt is, that excluſive of the mortification accruing from want of ſucceſs, you will be a total ſtranger to that internal eaſe which ariſes from the fitneſs of our abilities for the employments in which they are exerciſed. The facility with which we move when placed in a proper ſphere, counterbalances a multitude of inconveniences. It produces a conſtant flow of ſpirits, which enables us to bear with trials and diſappointments; it is the ſource of chearfulneſs and equanimity, the two richeſt preſents that nature can beſtow, and the abſence of which all the gifts of fortune are not able to ſupply; it converts our occupations into ſcenes of delight, and ſignally verifies the common ſaying, that a contented mind is a perpetual feaſt.

Obſervation and experience will ſoon teach you the truth of what has been aſſerted. Among your acquaintances have you not found thoſe to be the happieſt, who

who were engaged in buſineſſes correſponding to their parts? have you not your own ſelf, when employed ſuitably to your capacity, felt an alertneſs within you, that conveyed the higheſt ſatisfaction?

This inward placidity is the ſummit of a wiſe man's deſires; but to attain it, we muſt not wander from the path wherein our talents enable us to tread with ſecurity.

LETTER XXVI.

AFTER having given you thoſe informations reſpecting the libraries at Paris, which I thought might be ſerviceable, I ſhall now proceed to ſuch a review of the churches as I would wiſh you to take.

In this article Paris claims a decided pre-eminence over London. What the churches

churches of this immenſe metropolis were before the dreadful fire that conſumed ſuch a number, is not very clear: they do not appear however to have been very ſpacious.

At Paris, excluſive of their magnificence, there are many pariſh churches vying for dimenſions with the nobleſt cathedrals. This perhaps you will call a needleſs and oſtentatious expence: it may be ſuch; but it is an error of a ſplendid ſort; it contributes to the formation of excellent artiſts, and employs a multitude of hands, which otherwiſe might poſſibly have wanted occupation.

When we recal to our minds the ſituation of the European world, at the time when the major part of thoſe vaſt cathedrals were built, on which we look at preſent with ſo much admiration, we ſhall find that many, moſt indeed of thoſe almoſt numberleſs trades and occupations that

that give bread to the preſent race of men, were then either totally unknown, or confined to very few hands.

In ages ſo barren of thoſe buſineſſes that contribute to the pleaſurable and expenſive demands of luxurious ſociety, it was happy for the indigent and laborious claſſes, that ſome motive exiſted from whence to derive a beneficial employment.

This motive in the days of ignorance was, it cannot be denied, religion ill underſtood; but it proved not only a harmleſs, but a uſeful and ſalutary miſtake. Thoſe edifices that were in ſo many parts of Europe conſtructed through devotion or through repentance, drew thoſe ſums out of the cheſts of the wealthy and powerful, which, but for thoſe cauſes, might have remained there unemployed, or poſſibly might have been brought forth in the ſupport of feuds and contentions.

It is almoſt faſhionable among ſome people, to mention abbeys and monaſteries as monuments of the folly of thoſe who founded them: I hope you will ſuſpend your condemnation of their founders, till you have better arguments to alledge than thoſe whom I have heard expatiate on this trite ſubject.

In the firſt place, it is evident that their intentions were highly meritorious; and that knowing no other method of ſignaliſing their zeal in the cauſe of virtue and religion, more approved and applauded by the public, they complied with the reigning taſte of the times.

In the ſecond, it is equally clear that their money was by no means expended uſeleſsly: beſides the maintenance of the multitudes already mentioned, the erection of theſe numerous edifices either revived or kept alive the knowledge of architecture, and of ſculpture, of both

which little was employed in any other kind of buildings.

In the third, learning was preſerved and perpetuated in theſe places, and no where elſe. In this light theſe foundations, ſo heavily cenſured by the unthinking, were the auſpicious means of ſecuring to the preſent generation the knowledge and literature of the paſt.

I need not apprize you that in thoſe dark ages, as they are called pertinently enough when compared with ours, hardly any individuals applied themſelves to the commoneſt part of letters, but churchmen; and of theſe the ſecular clergy were often ſcandalouſly remiſs.

The regular clergy, by which is underſtood the various orders of monaſtics, were incomparably more aſſiduous and diligent in the proſecution of their ſtudies. None of them could be conſidered as entirely loſt

to

to the community of letters. They whoſe turn or capacity did not incline, or enable them to make a figure in ſchool divinity, or philoſophy, which were the prevailing taſte, were uſually taught Latin enough, if not to reliſh or underſtand, at leaſt to tranſcribe the writers in that language.

Until the art of printing was diſcovered, they were the only poſſeſſors, or compilers, of any kind of libraries. Notwithſtanding the additions made by their pens to literature are of little or no value in many, if not indeed in moſt reſpects, yet in ſome they are not contemptible. Several of their hiſtorical compoſitions eſpecially, are far from devoid of merit, either in matter or in manner.

It is unfair and ungenerous ſo readily to caſt a ſlight upon men and times, for being leſs fortunate than our own. Had not printing come to the aſſiſtance of mankind, there ſeems no reaſon to preſume that men would

would have thrown off the ſhackles of ignorance. Barbariſm and prejudice had taken ſuch profound root over all Europe, that long after that propitious invention, numbers of ſuch as ought to have known better, ſtill continued obſtinate in errors and abſurdities of the groſſeſt complexion, and often of the moſt fatal tendency.

Abbeys, monaſteries, and other foundations of that ſort ought therefore to be viewed as the refuge of the ſmall portion of learning remaining in unenlightened ages. This is paying them no compliment; it is the ſtrict truth, and it becomes every impartial man to acknowledge it, though he ſhould thereby incur the diſpleaſure of ſuch as, from incompetency to compare and judge of the merits of men according to different periods, indulge themſelves in the moſt unreſerved and illiberal condemnation of thoſe who built and endowed, and of thoſe who inhabited thoſe places.

Let

Let us not then triumph too unfeelingly in the ſuperiority we boaſt over our forefathers in knowledge, in literature, and in the polite arts: they are the reſult of fortunate caſualties, but not in the leaſt of our deſerts.

The fervour with which they applied themſelves to the purſuit of learning was far greater than that of ſucceeding and happier æras. The number of colleges founded ſince the epocha of printing, is leſs than of thoſe that were founded before.

Neither does it appear that the number of ſtudents is greater in them at preſent. The records of former times repreſent them occaſionally ſo numerous, that on comparing them with the numbers that are uſually found in the European univerſities at this day, they ſeem out of all proportion.

It is out of place to alledge that their ſtudies were nugatory, and mere loſs of time and pains. They were partly ſuch undoubtedly; but this we are to aſcribe to the misfortune of the times, and not to the diſpoſition of thoſe who proſecuted them: we ought rather to admire the zeal and ſedulouſneſs of their application, and the infinite labour with which they cultivated the barren ſoil appointed them.

You will not blame me, I hope, for endeavouring to reſcue our forefathers from the cenſure ſo frequently and ſo unjuſtly caſt upon them. Were the preſent age as deſtitute of advantages and means of intellectual improvement, as thoſe which it ridicules and ſatiriſes with ſo much warmth, it is much to be apprehended, that conſidering the frivolouſneſs which characteriſes it, we ſhould fall greatly ſhort of our anceſtors in literary qualifications, and incur much more deſervingly the accuſations urged againſt them with ſo much impropriety.

A pro-

A proemium of this kind appeared altogether not unneceſſary to precede ſo copious an article as that which churches and conventual edifices ſo commonly prove in the deſcription of things abroad. Many perſons are apt to vent ill-natured reflections on their inſpection of ſuch places, and to aſſume a kind of traditional privilege to exerciſe the ſevereſt ſtrictures upon all that relates to them. Hence it was fit and reaſonable to examine how far they were juſtifiable.

After this preface, I will next proceed to lay before you ſuch ideas and obſervations as have occurred to me upon viewing thoſe objects of public curioſity that are uſually pointed out to the attention of travellers.

Though I acknowledge myſelf no profeſt connoiſſeur, yet I never was diſpoſed to yield up my judgment implicitly to thoſe who are deemed ſuch. A true connoiſſeur ſhould

have a feeling and capacious mind, ſuſceptible of thoſe impreſſions which ariſe from a lively imagination and an exquiſite judgment, the firſt implanted by nature, the ſecond reſulting from an extenſive fund of liberal knowledge. According to this rule, which is I preſume well founded, the number of connoiſſeurs is nothing ſo great in reality as in pretenſions.

When you are introduced to the ſight of the various objects on which connoiſſeurs diſplay their remarks, loſe not if poſſible a word of them; but compare them with your own; and be not afraid to differ from them, when you cannot bring your ſenſations to correſpond with their endeavours to excite them.

You will often find them in rapture at objects that will give you no emotion. I will not be ſo preſumptuous as to affirm their raptures were affected; but whether it was want of perception in me, or the

unintereſtingneſs of the ſubject, while good manners extorted a feigned approbation, I have often felt an invincible repugnance to coincide with their ſentiments.

There are many individuals whoſe feelings no ſubjects can reach, unleſs they are of a great and ſtriking nature. I knew a gentleman of excellent underſtanding and education, who never expreſt the leaſt pleaſure at the moſt mirthful ſcenes that pencil could deſcribe, and yet never failed being charmed at thoſe that were grave and pathetic. I have alſo known perſons of no leſs merit, who were of quite a contrary diſpoſition.

Hence we ſhould diſtinguiſh between two things that are often confounded, taſte and temper: *non omnes omnia juvant*, we are not all pleaſed with the ſame things; even in beauty we differ; what charms one is inſipid to another.

Let not connoiſſeurs therefore paſs their ſentence of condemnation too haſtily upon people for not conforming to their notions of excellence: with many, if not moſt men, the ſubject is an eſſential motive of admiration or of indifference. It is recorded of Lewis the Fourteenth, who was a prince of the moſt refined taſte and diſcernment, that he could not endure with patience the ſight of objects of groteſque and low life buffoonry. Does it follow from thence that he wanted judgment and feeling?

Grandeur and magnificence are found to pleaſe all men. There is ſomething like authority and power impreſt upon them, which commands reſpect and veneration. For this reaſon undoubtedly, though there may be numbers unmoved at the ſight of the moſt excellent productions of painting or ſculpture, yet a noble piece of architecture is always ſure to make a due impreſſion on every beholder.

Archi-

Architecture may be eſteemed therefore the nobleſt of theſe three arts, as it is unqueſtionably the moſt uſeful. There is a natural beauty attending it, of which the power is felt univerſally, even by ſuch as are hardly capable of being made ſenſible of any other.

It is mentioned in the memoirs of the time, that the four Indian chiefs who came over to England in the reign of Queen Ann, teſtified no emotion of ſurprize or of admiration at any other objects, but thoſe of St. Paul's and Weſtminſter Abbey. Moſt certainly they were not taken particularly with the exactneſs of proportions, nor with the regularity of the building; neither could it be the dimenſions alone; it was the effect produced by the combination of all three, that formed in their minds an idea of greatneſs and ſublimity.

As the merit of architecture is ſo much beyond that of the other arts, as to be

perceivable even by the moſt common and vulgar eyes, it is a reaſon why you ſhould attach yourſelf peculiarly to the contemplation of the many noble ſtructures, that you will find in France, and in the other countries which you may viſit hereafter.

Nothing decorates a country, and does more honour to the taſte of the inhabitants, than magnificent edifices. The triumphant æras of nations have always been marked by architectural ſplendour. It is the pride and occupation of all men of eminent character, and proves in ſome meaſure that they are worthy of the great things which fortune may have done for them.

In the proſperous days of ancient Greece, we find the moſt polite and diſcerning among that celebrated people, no leſs intent on the cultivation of architecture, than on ſignaliſing themſelves by their proweſs and ſkill in military and civil affairs. Pericles,

cles, perhaps the greateſt name at Athens, employed his credit and authority ſo effectually in the embelliſhment of that city, that it became the wonder of the times, and drew ſtrangers from all parts to behold it.

The Romans, in imitation of the Greeks, were equally zealous in the decoration not only of Rome, but of every principal city throughout their empire. All the famous perſonages among them, in the days of their grandeur, were uncommonly diligent in procuring and encouraging the ableſt architects. They not only erected ſplendid edifices for their private uſe, but expended immenſe ſums on thoſe magnificent and vaſt piles of architecture, of which the very ruins fill us with aſtoniſhment at this day.

Rome in fact was not more the metropolis of the world by its power, than by the prodigious number and ſurpriſing ſplendour of its public and private buildings.

ings. Among the promoters of this taſte for magnificence, we may count the moſt illuſtrious of the Romans, Sylla, Lucullus, Pompey, Cæſar, Auguſtus, Agrippa, and various others whom it is needleſs to mention.

There was a noble emulation among all the people of high rank at Rome, who ſhould contribute moſt to adorn it: this was one of the moſt popular methods of riſing into favour and fame: every man that could afford it, thought himſelf in a manner bound to do ſomething of that nature for the public: it was equally the paſſion of the greateſt warriors, and of the wiſeſt men. Cicero in particular had formed ſeveral plans of this kind. Some of his letters to his friend Atticus are full of noble and extenſive projects, which he would undoubtedly have executed, had circumſtances permitted him.

This laudable diſpoſition was inherited by the Roman Emperors, and exerciſed upon

upon the moſt ſumptuous and expenſive ſcale. *Lateritiam inveni marmoream relinquo,* were, it is well known, the words of Auguſtus in his old age. A prince that was able to ſay, that he found Rome built of brick, but that he left it of marble, ſtood in no apprehenſion of being exceeded by any of his ſucceſſors.

But though they did not equal, they imitated him, however, with great ſucceſs. Domitian and Trajan, two men of very different characters, reſembled each other conſpicuouſly in their propenſity to embelliſh Rome; and, next to Auguſtus, diſtinguiſhed themſelves more than any other emperors.

Until the decline of the Roman empire, and almoſt indeed to its final deſtruction, the cultivation of architecture continued more or leſs to be a favourite object at Rome.

It may even be ſaid to have ſurvived the downfall of that miſtreſs of the world. While the reſt of Europe, and even Italy itſelf, was overrun by barbarians, they could not entirely ſubdue the knowledge and practice of that noble art: it remained in honour and requeſt; and though it did not flouriſh in its ancient ſplendour, it was on a footing much ſuperior to that of moſt other countries.

During the Gothic ages, notwithſtanding the ſtile of architecture differed eſſentially from that of Greece and Rome, yet we ought to acknowledge, that in many parts of Europe a ſpirit of generoſity and grandeur aroſe among the princes and ſuperior ranks of men, that has never been ſurpaſſed, if equalled, by their deſcendants.

Their taſte, it muſt be allowed, was inferior to the preſent, but far greater was their zeal and liberality in the conſtruction of thoſe numberleſs ſtructures, which are

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ſtill conſidered as the nobleſt ornaments of the places where they have been erected.

Almoſt all the cathedrals in Europe are monuments of the piety and munificence of our anceſtors. Whenever the period of their diſſolution arrives, ſhould it happen in ſuch an age as the preſent, it is far from probable they would be rebuilt upon the ſame plan of grandeur and dimenſions, on which they were primitively founded.

The ſtile of Gothic architecture ſeems peculiarly adapted to religious edifices.—There is a ſolemnity, a weightineſs, if you will indulge me with ſuch a word, in all that appertains to them, which inſpire veneration and ſerioufneſs in the beholders.

It has been conſtantly obſerved, that the ſight of our Gothic cathedrals excites a variety of pleaſing, though grave reflections: we view them, as it were, like public legacies left us through the bounty of

of our forefathers for the moſt ſublime purpoſes: ſuch an idea fills us at once with gratitude and reverence: we enter and examine them with an awful curioſity and ſatisfaction: all that meets our eye reminds us of ſomething either agreeable or inſtructive: the various objects wherein the workman or the artiſt has diſplayed his dexterity or genius, afford a copious fund of entertainment to thoſe who delight in tracing the riſe and progreſs, or the revival and improvement of arts, and in comparing the taſte and notions of former ages with the preſent.

What greatly adds to the venerableneſs of theſe ancient ſtructures, is the recollection of thoſe countleſs multitudes that have by turns filled them during a ſucceſſion of centuries.

If the admirers of the old Greeks and Romans, can experience ſo much content on treading the ſame ground where Solon

and Numa, Demoſthenes and Cicero, Homer and Virgil, Alexander and Cæſar, formerly lived and flouriſhed, with how much more pleaſure muſt we find ourſelves on the very ſpot, where ſuch numbers of our progenitors have ſo often aſſembled, where the moſt ſacred and ſolemn actions of their lives have been performed, where their thoughts have ſo frequently been taken up with conſiderations on that poſterity which now occupies the places where they ſtood, and fixes its contemplations on them as it were by way of return.

Such reflections naturally occur in thoſe ancient and venerable piles: we reſpect them for the ſake of thoſe ſeveral motives; and are always much readier to viſit them, than thoſe of modern conſtruction.

An advantage of this kind is by no means to be overlooked. The devotion of men will ſooner be kindled by ſuch recol-

recollections than without them: an eloquent and pathetic preacher may bring them very efficaciouſly to his aſſiſtance: they are truly what the philoſophers call arguments *ad hominem*, and never can fail to make a profound impreſſion.

I knew a clergyman ſo thoroughly perſuaded of this, that he always preferred an old church to a new one, whenever the ſubject of a ſermon was deep and moving. As he poſſeſſed the gift of ſpeaking in an eminent degree, he was never at a loſs in converting every circumſtance of time and place to its proper utility: this he could do with the more readineſs and facility, as he preached almoſt extempore, and without any other preparation than twenty or thirty words written on a card: he never uſed any other notes, and with the help of theſe would furniſh out a long diſcourſe.

He ſpoke with great deliberation and diſtinctiveneſs; and excelled in that which

is

is by judges eſteemed the eſſential quality of a good ſpeaker, the art of ſelecting with juſtneſs and diſcernment thoſe words and paſſages on which to lay a particular emphaſis: this he did in a manner remarkably ſtriking, and yet ſo eaſy and natural, that it ſeemed to flow from, and to be dictated by, the ſubject.

But the talent in which he was moſt conſpicuous, was that of availing himſelf of thoſe objects which were preſent or actually exiſting: of ſuch he made an admirable uſe; he employed them with ſurpriſing ſkill in fixing the attention and calling forth the ſenſibility of his auditors: a picture, a ſtatue, a tomb, the tranſactions of the times, the reports of the day, all contributed in his mouth to affect the paſſions, and to excite thoſe ſenſations which he intended.

From the deſcription of this preacher, you will naturally ſuſpect that he was not

a native of England; or if he was, that he did not exerciſe his profeſſion there. Neither of theſe indeed was the caſe. He was a Frenchman, a country curate in Normandy: his erudition was great, and his natural genius not leſs. He began the world by being preceptor to a young man of diſtinction; but diſliking the ſubſerviency required of him in the family of his pupil, he left it; and after a variety of thoſe ſtruggles with fortune, which men of merit who want patrons are always ſure of encountering, he obtained at laſt the retreat above-mentioned.

In England a man of his character would not ſucceed in the pulpit. Reaſoning alone ſeems to pleaſe the generality of Engliſh congregations: ſome of the beſt French ſermons tranſlated into our language, would appear no better than mere declamations.

Foreigners acquainted with the diſpoſition of the Engliſh, are often ſtruck at the

the contrarieties of which it is compounded. But the warmth and vehemence with which an Engliſhman enforces and ſupports his rights upon all occaſions, forms in their apprehenſion the moſt remarkable of all contraſts, when compared with the cold and frigid method ſo generally uſed in the compoſition and delivery of diſcourſes made in churches.

Some attempts have been made in France to introduce a cooler manner of ſpeaking and arguing in theſe matters: but orators of this kind are only acceptable *raris auribus* to the few, and will never bring about an alteration of that vicacity and impetuouſneſs of ſtile which characterizes French preaching, and by having ſo long been annexed to it, ſeems to claim a right of preſcription.

LETTER XXVII.

IT is now time to enter upon a review of thoſe churches and religious edifices that have given occaſion to the preceding reflections.

The grandeſt and moſt noble church in Paris, is unqueſtionably the cathedral of *Notre Dame*. It is a ſtupendous pile in the true Gothic taſte; but the inſide is full of modern decorations, almoſt all of them very recent.

The moſt curious monument of a Gothic nature, is that which meets your eye on entering. It is the well-known figure of St. Chriſtopher. He is a ſaint that ſeems to claim an ancient right of ſtanding at the door of all capital churches: he is always repreſented bearing Chriſt in the

the ſhape of an infant upon his ſhoulders: hence he derives his name.

The reaſon for making him of ſo gigantic a ſize, is that in the days of ignorance, the credit of this ſaint was ſo great, that a bare ſight of his image was reputed a preſervative againſt ſudden death and all ſiniſter accidents. In order therefore that all people might enjoy a full view of it, great care was taken to make it a Coloſſus. That of Paris meaſures near thirty feet in height.

The nave of this vaſt cathedral is remarkably ſpacious and majeſtic; and from the number of large and coſtly pictures arranged on each ſide, affords a conſiderable fund of entertainment.

Notwithſtanding the general maſſiveneſs of this ſtructure, the roof is remarkably light and airy, eſpecially above the choir. Around it is a roomy and agree-

able gallery, from whence ſpectators may enjoy a clear view of the many ceremonies performed upon high feſtivals, and hear the muſic below to the greateſt advantage. It is eſteemed the fineſt of any church in France; the choriſters being the beſt that can be procured for money.

In this, and in every Roman Catholic church, never omit ſeeing the treaſury. Nothing teaches a man of ſenſe what to think of times paſt, ſo completely as the contents of theſe repoſitories. Were it only for that reaſon, examine them thoroughly, and hearken with patience and politeneſs to the long details that will be given you concerning the heads, arms, legs, fingers, and bones of ſaints, and whatever elſe may be ſhewn you appertaining to, or relating to them.

But independently of what they contain, many of the ſhrines themſelves are valuable pieces of curioſity, as they aſcertain

tain the degree of expertneſs and elegance in workmanſhip of the times when they were made.

Obſerve with due attention from the ſame motive, the various other objects that will be offered to your inſpection; ſuch as croſſes, croziers, chalices, pattens, crucifixes, candleſticks, cenſers, mitres, copes, veſtments, and the numerous appurtenances of the Roman method of celebrating divine ſervice.

The review of ſome of the principal veſtries in countries of the Roman perſuaſion, is on theſe accounts extremely entertaining. To the Virtuoſo and Antiquarian they diſplay a world of articles to gratify their curioſity; to the Philoſopher and man of reflection they ſerve as memorials of the opinions and ideas of mankind, and of the changes and revolutions to which all things are ſubject, that are not founded

upon ſolid ground, and poſſeſt of intrinſic ſtability.

From the plan which I adopt in the examination of the ſubjects before us, you muſt perceive that my intention is not to go into any detail. I leave that to your guides and conductors. Beſides that it would prove an anticipation of a heavy and tedious nature, I mean not to excite in you too warm a propenſity for ſuch amuſements. I wiſh you to view all theſe things with a cool and philoſophic eye, and by no means whatever *con amore*.

Leave ſuch a diſpoſition to the frivolous, the idle, and the diſſipated. It is perhaps the moſt harmleſs and profitable manner in which individuals of that deſcription can ſpend their time. But to a mind deſirous of looking deeper than the ſurface of objects, they only appear in the light of inſtruments of thought and reflection upon matters of a far higher nature.

The

The mere ocular ſatisfaction which ariſes from viewing the productions of art, is the *ne plus ultra* of inferior capacities; but men of ſuperior genius ſee them with quite different eyes: while the firſt are intent ſolely on the work of the artiſt, the others, excluſive of their attention to ſuch particulars, carry their contemplations much further: the rudeneſs or the elegance, the ignorance or the knowledge, the infatuation or the wiſdom of the times that produced the works they behold, become through thoſe a ſubject of inſtructive and uſeful meditation.

It is in this frame of mind you ſhould viſit public buildings, and all other objects of curioſity. I would not however have you neglect the examination of their oſtenſible merits: on the contrary, view them as critically as you are able; it will prove an additional help to inveſtigate with ſucceſs the more eſſential points of conſideration, to which they will give

riſe

riſe in the minds of thoſe who are above ſtopping at bare exteriorities.

There are ſeveral tombs in the church of *Notre Dame* very deſerving of notice, chiefly for their antiquity, and the perſons whoſe remains they contain.

Of all improprieties, none is more deſerving of cenſure, than that of burying individuals of no ſubſtantial merit, in places that ought to be ſet apart for perpetuating the memory of thoſe who have done real honour and ſervice to their country.

When we ſee perſons noted for nothing but their wealth entombed among thoſe from whom a nation derives its glory, it raiſes a juſt indignation in every boſom that feels for the dignity of the public.

But it produces a much worſe effect in the opinion of all diſcerning men. It extin-

extinguiſhes that thirſt of fame which is the moſt powerful incentive to ſignalize themſelves in men of great minds and extraordinary parts.

What vigour and alacrity can we ſuppoſe them to feel, when they ſee the ſame honours paid to inſignificant as well as to exalted characters, when they ſee the moſt deſerving individuals laid in the ſame duſt with thoſe, whoſe pecuniary worth alone could purchaſe the breaking of ground for their reception.

People ſhould be peculiarly vigilant in preventing this reward of public merit from being liable to ſuch manifeſt proſtitution: it is often the ſole recompence beſtowed upon individuals, to whoſe abilities, heroiſm, or genius, a nation owes much of its grandeur and reputation.

It is hard therefore they ſhould ſhare it in common with ſuch as have no pretenſions

ſions to it. Public honours are a property which ought to be more ſacred after the death than during the life of ſuch as have a right to them: it is all that national gratitude has in its power to confer: it belongs to them excluſively; and it is the higheſt injuſtice to allow any others a participation.

Long has it been the complaint that monuments are not always what they ſhould be, teſtimonials of the worthineſs of thoſe to the memory of whom they were erected. For this reaſon none ſhould ever be ſuffered, without the ſanction of public authority, in thoſe places that have through cuſtom and preſcription been appropriated to the burial of eminent perſonages, and no private body of men ſhould have the privilege of granting permiſſion of interment in them at their own option.

The *Jus Imaginum* was in this reſpect one of the wiſeſt laws among the Romans.

By

By the ſame rule that they were not allowed to ſet up the images of their anceſtors without having obtained a licence for that purpoſe, it were to be wiſhed that no ſtatues, repreſentations, or memorials of any kind, ſhould have admittance upon any ſpot conſecrated to national uſes of this nature, until it had been publicly decreed, that the deceaſed was juſtly intitled to ſuch a remuneration.

LETTER XXVIII.

IN the examination of churches, after having taken a view of the other beauties of art, and curioſities they may contain, always remember to pay your laſt attention to the tombs and ſepulchral inſcriptions.

Theſe latter you will generally obſerve to be more elegant than almoſt any other ſpecies of compoſition. For this, two obvious

vious reaſons may be aſſigned; the firſt is, they are uſually of no length, and being expoſed to all the world, oblige the compoſer to exert himſelf. Secondly, they are on a ſubject that comes home to every body; and which excites thoſe pathetic feelings that are eaſily deſcribed and communicated.

A review of monuments is peculiarly moving to a man of a lively imagination, and humane ſentiments. It is, I muſt allow, a paſtime of a ſerious complection; but it both ſoftens and elevates our nature; none indeed but perſons of delicacy and refinement are capable of reliſhing it: Tickell with great truth calls it a luxury to vulgar minds unknown.

As I do not range you in that claſs, I earneſtly recommend to your inſpection the many excellent epitaphs you will meet with in the churches of Paris.

Next

Next to that of *Notre Dame*, is in point of real grandeur the church of St. Euſtatius. There is not in Europe a bolder, nor at the ſame time a more beautiful roof: it is of a ſurpriſing height, and appears ſtill higher than it is, from the lightneſs with which the whole edifice is conſtructed.

In this church, among other tombs, you will find that of the celebrated Colbert. You will alſo find another not leſs worthy of remark; I mean that of the illuſtrious Chevert. A man whoſe whole life was a ſeries of military atchievements, and who, as his epitaph juſtly inſinuates, ought, for the honour of his country, much more than for his own, to have died a Marſhal of France.

The church of St. Sulpice is intirely a modern building. It owes its erection to the indefatigable zeal and ſolicitude of the famous Languet, Rector of that pariſh. He lies buried in this church under a ſu-

perb monument, which no man could have better deſerved.

He was one of thoſe extraordinary characters, that ſeem born to command the inclinations of mankind, and to render them ſubſervient to their own deſigns. No man ever poſſeſt in a higher degree the talent of perſuaſion; it was to this he owed the perpetual ſupplies he drew from the purſes of the great and the wealthy, for the ſupport of the various undertakings, which his munificent diſpoſition was continually projecting. He was himſelf a mirror of the moſt perfect diſintereſtedneſs, and made no other uſe of the extraordinary influence he poſſeſt over the minds of the firſt perſonages of the kingdom, than to render the moſt eſſential and moſt extenſive ſervices to the community.

Among a variety of laudable inſtitutions, he was the author of one which deſerves particular commemoration. This was a

houſe of education for young women of birth, but narrow circumſtances. Inſtead of the faſhionable accompliſhments uſually beſtowed on females of diſtinction, they were taught the arts of good management and œconomy, and fitted for the cares and duties of a domeſtic life; when arrived at a proper age, they were diſmiſſed with a genteel proviſion, perfectly ſuitable to their reſpective birth and pretenſions.

In theſe and many other acts of beneficence, he generouſly expended his own fortune, and the immenſe contributions which his pious induſtry found means to levy upon the opulent and charitable part of ſociety. Virtue and merit in diſtreſs were ſure of a protector whenever he found them, and he made it his conſtant buſineſs to ſeek them out in every claſs and denomination of men.

So exalted and reſpectable a character ſhould not be paſſed over with a ſlight

and curſory mention: for this reaſon I have thought it expedient to give you this ſummary account of a man, of whom one may very properly ſay, *dignum laude virum muſa vetat mori.*

The church belonging to the Carmes is eſteemed one of the moſt elegant in Paris. Its dimenſions are not large; but it is moſt magnificently decorated, and is one of the greateſt curioſities in its kind that you will ever behold. The French call it *un Parfait Bijoux.* As it is ſituated in the ſtreet called Vaugirard, in the proximity of the Luxemburg, people often terminate their morning walk in that pleaſant ſpot, by a viſit to this church.

The Carmes account themſelves very ancient. They derive their primitive origin from the prophet Elias, when he withdrew to the deſerts and mountains, to ſcreen himſelf from the perſecution of Ahab King of Iſrael. But their firſt appearance

pearance ſince the Chriſtian æra, may be fixed about the beginning of the fifth century, on Mount Carmel in Paleſtine; from whence they received their denomination.

Their pretence of originating from Elias has given riſe to a remarkable *bon mot*, which has been put into the mouth of the famous Rector of St. Sulpice above-mentioned. This gentleman's piety, though very ſtrict and exemplary, was by no means pedantic and auſtere; he was of an open chearful diſpoſition, and occaſionally very gay and facetious: this rendered him extremely popular, and procured him a number of adherents and well-wiſhers; from whom he was continually receiving donations and legacies for the carrying of his various enterpriſes into execution. It happened that among theſe was an elderly perſon of diſtinction and great opulence, who had long been a particular friend and benefactor to the Carmes. Finding him-

ſelf infirm and ſickly, and that his diſſolution was approaching, he made a will, wherein he left to theſe good fathers, as the French term all the members of religious orders, an ample legacy, and a very moderate one to the Rector. This coming to the latter's knowledge, he haſtened to the teſtator, and repreſented to him in ſo forcible and efficacious a manner, the impropriety of leaving ſo much to people who did not want, and the far greater merit of providing for individuals in real indigence, that the dying man was prevailed upon to alter his will in favour of the Rector, and to make over to him what he had at firſt intended for the Carmes, to whom he aſſigned the portion deſigned for the other: on his leaving the gentleman's apartment, and going down the ſtairs, he met with two Carmes who were coming to viſit their old friend: knowing who he was, they ſaluted him with great reſpect, and made way for him to paſs; the Rector returned them the compli-

ment with equal politeneſs, and inſiſted on their paſſing firſt, adding in a jocoſe manner, that they were of the Old Teſtament and he only of the New.

This is not the only ſtory of the kind, wherein he diſplayed his dexterity and facetiouſneſs: he certainly had a copious ſhare of both, and often met with occaſions to exerciſe them.

In the ſtreet St. Antoine ſtands the magnificent church formerly belonging to the Jeſuits. It is the burial-place of the celebrated Prince of Condé, next to Henry the Fourth the greateſt man that ever ſprung from the family of Bourbon.

A French wit ſpeaking of this hero, ſays that all the atoms of intrepidity had met together at his birth, and formation; as it was formerly ſaid of Epicurus, that all the atoms of wiſdom and prudence were combined at his conception.

He was in every reſpect an extraordinary character; great in the field and equally conſpicuous in the endowments of his mind: his ſpeeches and repartees would fill volumes; they are often in the mouth of his admirers; moſt of them are of an original ſtamp, and equally beſpeak a nobleneſs of ſentiments and an acuteneſs of perception.

Let me on this occaſion recommend a method of imprinting things on your memory, which I have experimentally found very effectual. When you have viſited the tombs of famous men, while your mind is yet freſh from that occupation, and taken up with the ideas naturally ariſing from it, peruſe immediately the beſt accounts of their actions and times that you can procure: you will ſoon be convinced of the utility of ſuch a practice.

On the two ſides of the high altar of this church are depoſited the hearts of

Lewis

Lewis the Thirteenth and Lewis the Fourteenth, two Princes whoſe bigotted attachment to the Jeſuits is ſufficiently manifeſted by hiſtory, had they not, in the warmth of their predilection, bequeathed them this public teſtimony.

In the pariſh church of *St. André des Arcs*, lies buried the nobleſt hiſtorian that France ever produced, if one may not add, the nobleſt ſince the days of Auguſtus. This may without exaggeration be ſaid of ſuch a writer as Dethou; whoſe hiſtory of his own times yields not in point of truth and eloquence, the two pillars of hiſtory, to any that have been written ſince Livy and Tacitus.

Were it for no other reaſon, fail not to viſit his tomb. It is the only object worthy of remark in this church. Dethou was not only a great hiſtorian, but one of the ableſt politicians of his age, and what is more, a man of conſummate virtue and

inflexible integrity in the moſt difficult and worſt of times. All theſe motives conſpire to render him an object of peculiar attention and reſpect: ſuch men ought to be conſidered as luminaries of the world, as well as an honour to their country.

The church of *St. Genevieve* is of great antiquity. It belongs to the Abbey of Canons regular already mentioned. Beſides other particularities, it contains the tombs of ſeveral perſons of note; among others that of the celebrated Deſcartes, the deſtructor of the ancient and founder of the modern philoſophy.

But what will principally engage your attention, is the ſhrine of St. Genevieve, the tutelary Saint and patroneſs of Paris. Under this title ſhe has been recognized and held in the higheſt veneration in this city for a number of centuries. Her ſhrine is placed on the top of four marble pillars, behind the high altar, and incloſed in a wooden

wooden cheſt, richly gilt and painted. It is never uncovered but on the day of her own feſtival, and upon extraordinary occaſions, or to ſpeak more properly in times of public calamity.

The confidence of the Pariſian vulgar in the power and credit of this Saint is almoſt paſt belief: ſhe is, next to the Virgin Mary, the refuge of all people in adverſity; her interceſſion is implored not only by individuals in their private diſtreſſes, but by the whole corporation on public emergencies.

It is eſpecially in dangerous exceſſes of dry or of wet weather, that her aſſiſtance is requeſted by all the magiſtracy in their formalities. Her ſhrine is then taken out of its repoſitory, and carried in all the pomp of ſtate through the principal ſtreets of Paris, as the people of Naples bring forth the head of St. Januarius upon any alarming eruption of Mount Veſuvius.

There

There are ſeveral very large pictures in this church, repreſenting the magiſtrates and citizens of Paris addreſſing themſelves to this Saint, who appears on a cloud in the attitude of ſuing to Heaven in their behalf: theſe pictures have been ſet up in commemoration of benefits and relief obtained through her mediation: there is alſo in the choir a ſet of tapeſtry hangings very ancient, and for that reaſon very curious, exhibiting proceſſions and other religious ceremonies on the ſame account.

My only motive for entering into this detail, was to give you a juſt idea of the modes of infatuation ſo long prevalent even among the moſt ſenſible and enlightened nations: neither ſhould we ſpeak of them in the paſt tenſe; nor is it the mere vulgar that bends before the altar of Credulity; there are numbers of the better ſort, who would be highly ſcandaliſed at hearing any doubt expreſt of the many miracles attributed to this Saint. I have ſeen a

book wherein the author, a man otherwiſe of ſenſe and learning, tells you very gravely, that the favours granted by Heaven through her interceſſion, occaſion multitudes to have recourſe to it.

Adjoining to the church of *St. Genevieve* is that of *St. Etienne du Mont*; they are built ſo cloſe and contiguous, that a door opens from one into the other. This latter is the beautifulleſt ſpecimen in Paris of that kind of architecture which holds a medium between the Gothic and the modern: there is an airineſs and elegance in the inſide of this church quite of an original caſt; its painted windows are truly magnificent.

After ſeeing theſe two churches, obtain a ſight of the ſpot where the late Duke of Orleans lodged, or rather had a cell during the laſt ten years of his life. It is rather a cavity than apartment between the walls of both churches, narrow, inconvenient,

nient, ſolitary, and out of the way of all human comforts.

You will not wonder at this uncommon choice, when you recollect what I have already mentioned concerning the character of this Prince, and the ſyſtem of life he thought proper to adopt.

Should you have an opportunity of converſing with the Conventuals of the Abbey of St. Genevieve, neglect not to inform yourſelf of what further particulars you are able to gather concerning him: they will teach you what ideas to form of that enthuſiaſtic devotion which people of weak minds and little reaſoning account ſo meritorious.

In the mean time juſtice requires it to be acknowledged, that in the midſt of this erroneous and abſurd plan of living, an excellent ſoul was diſcoverable, and a fund of intrinſic goodneſs that made ample amends

amends for all miſtaken notions. Charity, tender-heartedneſs, generoſity, mildneſs, humanity, in ſhort, without bounds characteriſed all his actions: his benevolence was univerſal, and his income was in the ſtricteſt truth the property, as far as it would go, of every man of indigence and virtue.

The church of the Carthuſians has ſome very fine pictures; but thoſe that attract chief notice are in the cloiſter. They are numerous, and contain the Hiſtory of the Life of St. Bruno, the founder of this order. He is a Saint of the eleventh century, which is ſaying enough, when we reflect that ſuperſtition was then in its full vigour, and the minds of men ſuſceptible of its ſtrongeſt impreſſions.

Solitude and a total ignorance of what paſſes, and almoſt of whatever has paſt in the world, religious matters excepted, ſeem to be the baſis on which this inſti-

tution

tution is founded. You will naturally aſk what purpoſe it can anſwer in ſociety: the only reply that can be given, is that it has nothing to do with ſociety.

The choir of the church of the Auguſtins is one of the fineſt in Paris: it contains ſome very valuable pictures, and ſtrikes one altogether through its agreeableneſs as well as grandeur.

This order has many branches. It originated towards the cloſe of the fourth century; but hardly made any appearance till about the end of the thirteenth.

In this convent are held the aſſemblies of the French Clergy, correſponding with our convocations. In it alſo are preſerved the portraits of all the Knights of the order of the Holy Ghoſt ſince its firſt inſtitution, by Henry the Third, King of France, in one thouſand five hundred and ſeventy-eight. As the firſt Knights were created

created and inveſted with the enſigns of the order in this church, it has been cuſtomary to preſent the convent with their pictures. They fill two ſpacious halls, and being exact likeneſſes, and very well executed, are deemed a great curioſity.

In the pariſh-church of St. Gervais are ſome very remarkable pictures: the ſtructure is altogether very noble, and by Connoiſſeurs ſpoken of with great applauſe.

The famous Tellier, Chancellor of France, has a ſuperb monument in this church: he was eſteemed an eminent politician; but did not certainly ſhew himſelf ſuch in the zeal which he diſplayed for the revocation of the edict of Nantz; the moſt fatal error ever committed by any of the Miniſtries of Lewis the Fourteenth. Neither was his character free from the imputation of partiality and vindictiveneſs, qualities in no ſmall meaſure inherited by his ſon the celebrated Louvois.

One

One of the moſt elegant pariſh-churches in Paris is that of St. Paul. It has an air of decency and neatneſs ſuperior to any others: this is due, in the opinion of judicious obſervers, to the agreeable mixture of ſimplicity and richneſs in its architecture and decorations. It has a variety of monuments and inſcriptions to the memory of illuſtrious perſonages.

In the ſmall but pleaſing church of the Capuchine Nuns, you will ſee the tomb of Louvois, the flint-hearted Miniſter of the haughty Lewis the Fourteenth in the days of his grandeur. He had not a ſoul equal to his elevation, and could not bear the leaſt ſhock of adverſity. Grief at being harſhly ſpoken to by that monarch ſent him to an untimely grave.

Next to *St. Sulpice*, the moſt magnificent pariſh-church in Paris is that of *St. Roch*. Its architecture without, and ſumptuouſneſs within, are in the nobleſt taſte;

taſte; it is intirely modern, and is altogether an equally vaſt and conſpicuous edifice.

I cannot paſs over this article without taking notice of the apprehenſions, which a celebrated Rector of this pariſh uſed to expreſs for the reputation of its tutelar Saint. There lived in his time a famous critic, of profound learning, and equal intrepidity in applying it properly. This critic had, it ſeems, been very unfavourable to ſome Romiſh Saints, whoſe very exiſtence he had called in queſtion. The Rector, who probably was not over-perſuaded of the reality of the patron of his pariſh, never met this gentleman without ſhewing him every mark of deference and reſpect, in order to engage him to be merciful to his Saint.

In the ſtreet of *St. Honoré* ſtands the collegiate church of that name. It is ſmall, but the chapter is reckoned the richeſt in

Paris. Here lies interred the renowned Cardinal Dubois, the favourite and Miniſter of the no leſs noted Duke of Orleans, Regent of France in the minority of the late King.

No man's character has been treated with more freedom. As he was the very reverſe of a bigot, and addicted to all kind of licentiouſneſs, he rendered himſelf odious to thoſe who profeſt regularity and devotion, and became an object of univerſal ſcandal throughout the nation: but ſecure of his maſter's protection, he ſet all complaints at defiance, and continued in the purſuit and enjoyment of every pleaſure that wit or money could procure.

Herein he was fully countenanced and ſeconded by his patron. No two men ſeemed more completely fitted by nature to fill jointly the ſame career. Their temper and diſpoſition exactly correſponded, their ideas were ſimilar on eſſential as

well as immaterial objects. In their most serious occupations and most frivolous pastimes their abilities and taste perfectly agreed. Freedom of thought and libertinism of morals was the system they adopted in private life, equally determined to range at large in every gratification of body and of mind.

In public affairs this Cardinal was a man of extraordinary penetration and activity, a profound politician and an able negociator: in one particular he differed greatly from that description of a courtier, which Lord Chesterfield has drawn, as comprehending a full idea of what was necessary to constitute and complete such a character. The Cardinal was remarkably blunt and unceremonious both in his speech and manners, and yet, contrary to what might be expected from such a disposition, he possest the talent of persuading and even of pleasing.

In the church of *St. Thomas du Louvre*, are magnificently entombed the remains of Cardinal Fleury, his ſucceſſor in the miniſtry at the diſtance of a few years. No two men could leſs reſemble each other: the latter was a model of politeneſs, affability, and courtly breeding, regular in his life and edifying in his converſation; poſſeſſing at the ſame time great ſuppleneſs and art, and uncommonly dextrous in the talent of inſinuating himſelf into the good opinion and favour of thoſe whoſe friendſhip he was deſirous to obtain.

A man far ſuperior to both theſe lies buried under a moſt ſtately monument in the church of the Sorbonne. This is the great and juſtly famous Cardinal Richelieu. It is by numbers eſteemed the moſt exquiſite piece of ſculpture in France, and inferior to nothing of the kind that has appeared ſince the days of Lyſippus and Praxiteles.

This

This noble monument is in the middle of the choir. It was placed there in order to teſtify the gratitude of the ſociety of Sorbonne, to which he was ſo eminent a benefactor. No figure can exhibit a ſtronger likeneſs of the perſon for whom it is intended.

It may not be amiſs to take notice of the very different impreſſion made by this almoſt animated figure, upon two of the moſt celebrated perſonages in the preſent century, Lewis the Fourteenth of France, and the great Czar Peter of Muſcovy.

The former viewed it with the attention and diſcernment of a Connoiſſeur; his remarks were confined to the workmanſhip, and his praiſes to the artiſt.

But the ſecond viewed it with the eyes of a King; he claſped the figure in his arms; would to God, ſaid he, that I had ſuch a Miniſter as thee.

I do not think it is poſſible to find in the hiſtory of theſe Princes, any paſſage that ſets their reſpective characters in a ſtronger light. The one, though bred in Barbariſm ſhewed he was born with the ſoul of a hero; the other, educated in the center of politeneſs and refinement, appeared in this inſtance in no higher a character than of an admirer and judge of the fine arts.

Without meaning to depreciate this character, is it not more becoming a man of rank and ſentiments to have the feelings of a Peter, than the ſkill of a Lewis.

It is principally to improve your mind and excite an emulation of what is great and noble, that theſe various anecdotes have been occaſionally interſperſed. The beauties of ſtatuary and of ſculpture are of much leſs importance to a gentleman, than the knowledge of thoſe to perpetuate the memory of whom they were employed.

Theſe

Theſe beauties when abſent from the eye are eaſily forgotten; nor is it of any material conſequence they ſhould be remembered, provided our memory retains the tranſactions and the perſons recorded by them.

The church belonging to the Abbey of *St. Germain des Prés* already mentioned, is a Gothic pile, venerable for its antiquity, and for the many tombs it contains. The moſt worthy of remark is that of John Caſimir King of Poland, who reſigned his crown in order to live his latter days in peace. There are ſeveral excellent epitaphs in this place, which being of dates very diſtant from each other, will exerciſe your penetration in diſcovering the reſpective taſte and ideas of the times when they were written.

The church of the Celeſtins is not very ſpacious, but contains more tombs in proportion to its ſize than any church in

Paris; ſome of them are very magnificent: being ſo numerous they will enable you to trace the progreſs of ſculpture from the ancient to the modern taſte.

The churches of the Dominicans in the ſtreet called *St. Jaques*, who are thence called Jacobins, and of the Franciſcans, alias Cordeliers, in the ſtreet of this name, are worth viſiting on the ſame account.

This laſt is a very numerous order, conſiſting of a variety of branches. Its primitive founder was the famous St. Francis in the beginning of the thirteenth century, one of the moſt remarkable ſince the Chriſtian æra for the inſtitution, revival, or regulation of religious orders.

A church of which the ſituation is remarkably advantageous, is that of the female monaſtry called *Le Val de Grace*. It was built and endowed by Anne, Queen Conſort to Lewis the Thirteenth and mother to Lewis the Fourteenth.

It is a truly magnificent edifice, ornamented without and within according to the modern rules of architecture. In it are depoſited the hearts of many perſons of the blood royal, particularly that of the foundreſs.

She was a Princeſs of a noble and generous diſpoſition, full of ſprightlineſs and affability; ſhe contributed not a little to diffuſe a ſpirit of elegance, and a dignity of manners among the French ladies, and to poliſh and refine the modes of ſocial intercourſe between the ſexes. Her court was in theſe reſpects a model to all others, and was juſtly eſteemed the center of politeneſs and good-breeding.

In the neighbourhood of the *Val de Grace* ſtands the ſmall but beautiful church of the Carmelites, ornamented in the richeſt taſte; but for nothing ſo remarkable as for belonging to the Convent, where the famous Ducheſs De la Valiere retired from

from the world, in the flower of her life and beauty, in order to ſpend the remainder of her days in doing penance for having been the miſtreſs of Lewis the Fourteenth.

She was the moſt lovely woman in France, endowed with every qualification that renders her ſex amiable in the eyes of men: ſhe was worthy of a more conſtant lover than that Prince, who did not ſufficiently feel the worth of ſuch a woman, and forſook her for one that was far leſs deſerving of his attachment. She compoſed in her retreat ſeveral works of piety, one of which in particular is eſteemed a maſter-piece for elegance of language, and ſublimity of ſentiments.

In many of the pariſh-churches above-enumerated, there is what the French call a Calvary; it is always behind the high altar, and repreſents the ſufferings and death of Chriſt. Some of thoſe calvaries are very curious and beautiful.

Another]

Another particularity is the magnificent porches of ſeveral of theſe churches. That to which connoiſſeurs give the preference is *St. Gervais*: it is eſteemed the moſt faultleſs and finiſhed piece of architecture in its kind.

But there are others which I apprehend you will find equally ſtriking, ſuch as thoſe of *St. Sulpice*, the new church of *St. Genevieve*, *St. Euſtache*, *St. Roch*, and *Le Val de Grace*, all of them modern ſtructures as well as the firſt.

The French pride themſelves in the porches of their churches, as the Engliſh in the ſteeples of theirs. There is no country that offers ſuch a beautiful variety of theſe as England: thoſe of London are, in the opinion of judicious foreigners, one of its greateſt curioſities.

I have now gone through as many of the churches at Paris, as I could recollect to be worthy of a traveller's notice.

In

In this review I have had it chiefly in my eye, to render them the means of conveying the knowledge of ſuch men and ſuch things as merited a place in your memory.

For this reaſon I would recommend a judicious peruſal of the epitaphs of celebrated perſons, and a due attention to the anecdotes concerning them that may be mentioned on ſuch occaſions: it is one of the moſt uſeful and profitable methods of acquiring information.

Viewed in this light the viſitation of churches, and the examination of tombs and monumental inſcriptions, may be compared to the ſtudy of ancient medals, and is of no leſs utility in the elucidation of paſt tranſactions.

I knew an Italian gentleman of extenſive knowledge in hiſtorical matters, and uncommon accuracy in what related to

per-

perſons of figure and eminence. He often confeſt that the ſources from whence he drew ſome of the moſt material information, were epitaphs. He had in his travels made a prodigious collection of them: I have heard him ſay that they had afforded him much more aſſiſtance in clearing up and aſcertaining a variety of facts, than he had at firſt expected.

Curioſity alone had been the original motive for collecting them; but in proceſs of time, being a man of great reading, he found them ſo ſerviceable, that what he began upon the ſcore of amuſement, he continued upon the footing of inſtruction.

It may be objected that funeral inſcriptions are always partial to the deceaſed, and that one cannot therefore rely on what they ſay.

The truth of this may be admitted, without invalidating the propriety of conſidering

ſidering them as general records of men and things. Is hiſtory any more? Does it neceſſarily exclude partiality? Perhaps on due reflection, we are more liable to be miſled by this latter, which always profeſſes to be impartial, than by the former, which we know and expect to be favourable to the dead.

This knowledge and expectation ſets us naturally upon our guard: we read with caution, and miſtruſt what we are conſcious has been written by the hand of friendſhip, or dictated perhaps by influence or authority.

Theſe ideas neceſſarily accompany us in the peruſal of epitaphs, and ſerve as a counterpoize to the praiſes with which they may be loaded; but it is not the ſame in the peruſal of hiſtory; the impreſſion it makes has quite another weight, and is uſually, if not always, much more effectual in determining our belief.

It is peculiarly remarkable, that many of thoſe men who have had great honours paid to them after their demiſe, have been as much neglected during their lives. This reminds one of the Latin adagium, *Vivit poſt funera virtus.* You will agree with me in deploring the fate of ſuch men, and that merit ſhould ſo frequently have no other encouragement, than the proſpect of living in the remembrance of mankind, when its unhappy poſſeſſor is no more.

Eminent merit is an invidious poſſeſſion; it is a conſtant eye-ſore to the mean ſpirited and narrow hearted, who, unfortunately for ſociety, compoſe a numerous body, always intent on pulling down to their own level whatever riſes above it. When people of this ſtamp proſper in the world, their ſelfiſhneſs is offended at the ſight of ſuch as are confeſſedly their ſuperiors in the qualifications of the mind: hence they ſtudy by way of revenge, to

diſ-

diſcourage and depreſs them, and to undervalue thoſe talents in which they excel.

Conſiderations of this nature cannot fail to occur, when we ſurvey the tombs of illuſtrious individuals, whoſe lives have been filled with hardſhips and ſtruggles. The envy and ill treatment they experience while living, and the applauſes beſtowed upon them when dead, agree but too well with the complaint which Horace made long ago: *Virtutem incolumem odimus, ſublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.*

There is however a favourable peculiarity attending men of this character. As their circumſtances remove all ſuſpicion of partiality to their memory from intereſted motives, we may the more readily give credit to the good that is ſpoken of them. Hence thoſe epitaphs that are made for individuals of this claſs, may be read with very little fear of deception.

The

The celebrated Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, was particularly fond of contemplating the monuments of famous men. It was one of his moſt uſual paſtimes in the frequent travels through his extenſive dominions.

I have heard a Poliſh gentleman aſſert the ſame of the great John Sobieſki, King of Poland. It was an homage, that prince uſed to ſay, which monarchs ought to be the firſt to pay, as it was the powerfulleſt incentive with men of noble diſpoſitions, to ſignalize themſelves in their reſpective ſtations: it coſt kings nothing, and effected a great deal: it was due to departed worth, and would produce an ample harveſt of meritorious deeds among the living: let me, therefore, would he add, diſcharge a debt by which I can loſe nothing, and may gain much: on theſe occaſions he frequently repeated theſe words of Virgil, *his ſaltem accumulem donis et fungar inani munere*, meaning that the leaſt he

could do was to beſtow admiration and praiſe where it was ſo juſtly deſerved, and where it was all he could give.

LETTER XXIX.

BESIDES the remarks that have been made on churches, and what they contain, you will find various occaſions to indulge your curioſity in other matters relating to them.

I will ſay nothing of the numerous ceremonies you will be witneſs of. Theſe I ſhall leave to your private reflections. Whatever is well meant, it is ungenerous to cenſure: evil intentions alone merit condemnation: while no detriment reſults to ſociety from religious formalities, it is equally abſurd and iniquitous to quarrel about them.

What

What is particularly worthy of your obſervation, is the decency and decorum with which they are performed, and the orderly behaviour and exactneſs of thoſe who are employed in the many branches of church duty.

I have been often ſurpriſed that ſo witty and ingenious a people as the French, could ſo long put up with ſuch wretched performances, as many of the hymns that were uſed in churches before the introduction of thoſe compoſed by Santeuil. My ſurpriſe is the greater, as more than a century and a half had elapſed before his time, ſince a taſte for elegance and latinity had been reſtored in France.

This may be conſidered as one of the many proofs of the power of cuſtom, and that men govern themſelves by prejudices, even while they are acknowledged as ſuch. Habit has long been found of more influence than the conſciouſneſs of the utility

that would reſult from an alteration, however proper and judicious.

Notwithſtanding the ſuperior beauty of Santeuil's compoſitions, there are ſtill adherents to the old hymns, as in England we have many who prefer Hopkins and Sternhold's verſion of the pſalms to Tate and Brady's, Watts's, or any other.

The beſt Latin tranſlations of the pſalms in verſe, are thoſe of Buchanan, of Johnſton, and of Commire the jeſuit. But notwithſtanding their excellence, of the firſt eſpecially, they have never been introduced into churches. The old pitiful verſion of the vulgate, as it is called, ſtill maintains its ground in all the Romiſh churches, in ſpite of the univerſal conviction of its inelegance and barbariſm.

Prudentius, who flouriſhed in the fourth and fifth century, is author of the beſt hymns anciently uſed in the Gothic ages.

Se-

Several are aſcribed to Hilary, Biſhop of Poitiers, in France, and to Ambroſe, Biſhop of Milan, both his cotemporaries. Others have alſo contributed; but their ſtile in general, not excepting that of Prudentius himſelf, is far from being pure and correct: many of theſe compoſitions, ſuch in particular as belong to the times ſubſequent to the writers that have been named, are abſolutely devoid of all kind of literary merit.

What I preſume will frequently attract you to their churches are the muſical performances, and ſplendid proceſſions on feſtival days. Theſe, however, are not ſo magnificent, and do not return ſo often as they did formerly. The French are at preſent much leſs taken up with theſe matters than they uſed to be; and have greatly relaxed in this part of their devotion, to the no ſmall concern of ſuch as admire and extol the zeal and piety of preceding times.

You will nevertheleſs be witneſs of as many as are neceſſary to give you an idea of what they were, while the minds of men were plunged in ignorance and credulity.

The abſurdities of which people were then guilty, ſeem to thoſe moderate and cool Proteſtants who never ſaw countries of the Romiſh perſuaſion, to border almoſt on calumnies and falſhoods; but they are credible enough to ſuch as have ſeen Italy and Spain, where greater veſtiges of them remain than in France.

It was principally in their proceſſions the bigotry of the old Romaniſts was moſt viſibly diſplayed.

The moſt curious account of this nature that ever came to my knowledge, was of a proceſſion made in honour of St. Peter. It was a very ſerious and formal buſineſs, publicly authorized by the magiſtracy and clergy

clergy of the place. In ſeaſons of great drought, a ſolemn addreſs was made to the image of this ſaint for wet weather. In order to make him the more ſenſible of their wants, and to urge him, as it were, the more preſſingly, they carried him to the ſide of a river; there they ſung to him, "St. Peter, help us in our diſtreſs; obtain ſome rain for us, once, twice, thrice:" the image making no anſwer, the populace inſiſted it ſhould be plunged into the water, unleſs their requeſt was forthwith granted: upon this the heads of the place repreſented to the croud, the impropriety of treating the ſaint ſo diſreſpectfully; that without coming to theſe extremities, they might be aſſured, that like a kind father, he would not fail to procure the rain they prayed for. After this repreſentation, in order thoroughly to pacify the people, ſecurity was given to them for the performance of what it promiſed; and it never failed, it is ſaid, on their accepting the ſecurity, to rain within twenty-four hours after.

This ridiculous ceremony was obſerved in more places than one. So confident was the multitude in its efficacy, that it was with difficulty prevailed upon to ſuffer it to be laid aſide; and not until treatiſes had been written to prove its abſurdity.

The moſt remarkable ceremonies that will occur to your notice in France, are thoſe which annually return in Paſſion week. Among theſe you will obſerve the bleſſing or conſecration of a very large and magnificent taper. It is of the fineſt white wax, and ſometimes ten feet or more in length.

A motive for mentioning this in particular, is that according to a grave author of the Roman perſuaſion, it was anciently cuſtomary to diſtribute portions of this taper among the people, to perfume and keep in their houſes, their fields and their vineyards, as a preſervative againſt evil ſpirits and bad weather.

Whatever complaints may be made againſt the preſent generation in France, on the ſcore of levity of behaviour in churches, the devotees who make them, can alledge nothing to compare with the ſtrange liberties taken, and in a manner tolerated in theſe places during ſeveral ages.

An annual day was kept, called the Feſtival of Folly. It was ſolemnized in churches with abundance of ridiculous ceremonies. They who were concerned in the acting of this farce, choſe one out of their own body, whom they created Biſhop of Fools: this election was made on the firſt day of every new year: they arrayed him in epiſcopal robes, and he performed a mock ſervice. His retinue in the mean while danced, eat, played, burned old ſhoes by way of incenſe, and committed other extravagances of the ſame kind. About the cloſe of the twelfth century a biſhop of Paris, in order to put

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an end to theſe abſurdities, founded in his dioceſe a ſolemn celebration of the circumciſion of Chriſt, on the firſt of January, the more effectually to exclude from churches the obſervation of this prepoſterous feſtival. But the good biſhop's ſcheme ſucceeded only in part; the fondneſs for this extraordinary ſpecies of diverſion, laſted yet a long time; and it was not finally aboliſhed till upwards of two hundred years after.

A principal difference between a Proteſtant and a Romiſh church, is the number of chapels in the latter, every one of which has an altar or communion table, as we term it; whereas in our churches there never is but one.

Each of theſe chapels is dedicated to ſome ſaint, whoſe votaries have thereby an opportunity of paying their devotions to him in a more particular manner, whenever

ever their fervour is uncommonly warm, or their neceſſities preſſing.

Several ſaints being much more conſpicuous than others, their reputation is viſible by the ſuperior decoration of their chapels, as alſo by the numbers of thoſe who frequent them.

It will afford you both paſtime and inſtruction to examine what is recorded of them in theſe places; peculiar gifts and powers are appropriated to divers of them: you will be diverted with the ſtories of the wonderful events which they have operated; and by attending to times, places, perſons, and circumſtances, you will ſoon teach yourſelf to find a ſolution for thoſe wonders.

You will ſometimes obſerve pictures and tablets hung up, to repreſent and commemorate benefits received through their means: many are worth peruſal either for

their antiquity or ſingularity; I have read ſome in very elegant Latin. They are upon many accounts worth your attention, as they will give riſe to many reflections, and lead to a variety of uſeful diſcuſſions.

The cuſtom of lighting up ſmall wax candles under the images of ſaints, is not ſo common as formerly; you will however ſee enough of it, eſpecially on great feſtivals.

There are now and then ſome wags among the French, who amuſe themſelves with jeſting on this invocation and patronage of ſaints: among the various tales I have heard, take the following as a ſpecimen:

A ſurgeon of high reputation, for the cure of a certain diſorder, went to view the curioſities of the abbey of St. Dennis: on ſeeing the ſtatue of Charles the Eighth, King of France, he kneeled before it with much

much ſeeming reſpect: a monk who was preſent told him he was greatly miſtaken, and that it was not the image of a ſaint: my good father, anſwered the ſurgeon, I perfectly know what I am about; he may be no ſaint for you, but he is the beſt patron I ever had, ſince through him I am now worth thirty thouſand livres a year: ſuffer me therefore to return him my ſincere thanks.

To the expedition of this monarch into Italy, for the conqueſt of the kingdom of Naples, was owing the introduction of the venereal diſtemper into France, which has ever ſince proved ſo extenſive and ſo profitable a branch of buſineſs in ſurgery. It retains to this day among the French the appellation of *Mal de Naples*, the Neapolitan evil. Soldiers, officers, in ſhort almoſt his whole army was infected, himſelf not eſcaping. This fatal conſequence of that celebrated expedition was, it may be added, in the words of the following diſtich,

diſtich, the only memorial remaining to the French of their temporary poſſeſſion of that kingdom.

Parthenopes Regnum ſimul olim Galle luemque
Cepiſti, reſtat nunc tibi ſola lues.

The catalogue of Romiſh ſaints is ample, I dare ſay, far beyond your conception. I do not know the preciſe number to which it may amount at preſent; but it muſt certainly be prodigious from the account I remember to have ſeen of thoſe belonging to one ſingle order, that of St. Bennet: they were computed at fifty-five thouſand four hundred and ſixty. This computation was made about the time of the holding the council of Conſtance, which was in the year one thouſand four hundred and fourteen.—How many have been added ſince I cannot tell.

The right of canoniſing, that is to ſay of declaring any one a ſaint, and authoriſing

riſing people to addreſs their ſupplications to him as ſuch, is veſted ſolely I believe in the Pope. He is aſſiſted by cardinals, and others whom he may judge proper to aſſociate with him in this buſineſs; but the ultimate deciſion reſts with him.

The Pope cannot, however, after the formalities of a canoniſation have taken place, deprive the ſaint he has made of that title: like a Britiſh peerage, it may be given, but not taken away by the donor.

You will here obſerve an eſſential difference between ancient and modern Rome, in the powers aſſumed and exerciſed by both upon occaſions of this nature. In ancient Rome they were extended to a far greater degree of latitude: the ſenate and conſuls were ſovereign arbitrators in theſe matters: they appointed the gods that were to be worſhipped, and abrogated

gated them according to their own diſcretion. Thus deities were made or unmade by a ſenatorial decree, and the old in turn gave place to new; who, like their predeceſſors, enjoyed but precarious honours and exiſtence.

Before the high altar in the Romiſh churches, and before thoſe of ſome of their favourite ſaints, lamps are burning night and day. They are uſually ſuſpended in veſſels of gilt braſs, and often of maſſive ſilver. The chief reaſon for mentioning them, is that ſome years ago, as I have been informed, a naturaliſt projected a renewal of that famous lamp of Callimachus, which was ſaid to burn a whole year without any freſh ſupply of light, oil, or fewel.

This celebrated architect, beſide inventing the Corinthian order, is reported among other ingenious diſcoveries to have contrived a lamp of this nature, which was

was placed in the Temple of Minerva at Athens.

A particularity will probably ſtrike you on your Sunday viſits to churches. While the French world at large is diſſolved in pleaſure, and rioting in all ſorts of diverſions and merriments, the pulpits are univerſally reſounding with the warmeſt exhortations to avoid them, and the moſt dreadful denunciations of future puniſhment to ſuch as neglect their warning. The contraſt between what is ſpoken here and acted elſewhere, preciſely on this day, is truly curious.

The truth is, that no preachers are more ſevere in their doctrines than the French. They labour with peculiar vehemence to give their audience a diſtaſte and averſion for all the enjoyments and comforts of this life. I doubt not you will agree with me, in thinking that they outſhoot their mark: by enforcing the neceſſity of adoping prin-

ciples totally incompatible with human nature, their ſermons often prove rather diſcouragements than invitations to piety.

This indiſcreet zeal very ill accords with that liberty and countenance given to all manner of amuſements, for which the French police is ſo remarkable: one would imagine from thence, that they who preſided over this department, were conſcious of their neceſſity, in order to keep the public in good humour, and entertained at the ſame time no reſpect for the opinion of thoſe who combated them.

Certain it is, theſe advocates for a total renunciation of what they call the frivolous pomps and vanities of life, ſhew themſelves miſerably defective in the knowledge of what is eſſentially conducive to the well-being of ſociety, and indeed abſolutely neceſſary for the comfortable

able ſubſiſtence of the individuals that compoſe it.

Were the maxims inculcated with ſo much energy, to be reduced to practice, what would become of thoſe countleſs multitudes who have no other means of earning their daily bread, but their ſkill in thoſe that are called the arts of luxury?

Theſe declaimers forget that vanity and luxury are but relative terms, and only applicable to ſuch as live beyond their income: the more money is expended, the leſs men are liable to want and miſery, which are never known where buſineſs is briſk and work is provided for the laborious. Inſtead of preaching therefore this apathy and diſreliſh for the things of this world, they ought on the contrary to exhort mankind, each according to his abilities, to afford all poſſible encouragement to activity and induſtry, as the only ſources from whence the proſperity of individuals

at large can reaſonably be expected to flow.

In contradiction to the tenets maintained by ſo many of their preachers, a French writer ſays, that "it is through a peculiar Providence the reign of vanity has been permitted to ſucceed to that of charity, which has long been departed: three parts in four of the human race would die of hunger, were not the various branches of worldly vanity ſo many channels through which they are ſupplied with food: until the ſpirit of charity is revived, it were unwiſe to aim at the total deſtruction of vanity; ſuch endeavours can only proceed from an ignorance of the character of the preſent times. The opulent ſhould therefore expend their riches freely and abundantly among artificers, tradeſmen, and people in buſineſs; inſtead of abridging their luxury, they are on the contrary bound in duty to continue it, for the employment and ſupport of the

ingenious and working claſſes." This may not be the creed of enthuſiaſm and fanaticiſm, but it is certainly the doctrine of ſound reaſon.

Exceſs of ſelf-denial and mortification is ſeldom, if ever, inculcated by the Engliſh clergy: they are, highly to their honour, governed by more rational ideas, ſuch as are conſiſtent with practicability, and tend evidently to the benefit and ſolid happineſs of mankind.

I need not tell you that whatever has a different tendency cannot be dictated by the ſpirit of wiſdom. The real teſt of the truth or falſehood of all religious maxims and inſtitutes, is their agreement with, or their repugnance to the felicity of man in his actual ſtate, and in the viſible diſpenſation of things.

Hear as many of their noted preachers, and ſee as many of their religious ceremo-

nies as you can with conveniency: it is ſurely a paſtime far preferable to that of lounging at home or elſewhere, which is too frequently the caſe of thoſe whoſe minds are not ſufficiently ſupplied with motives of activity.

Among others you will be much entertained with their funeral ſolemnities. An ode, or rather a ſeries of Leonine verſes in ſhort metre, divided into ſtanzas, is always ſung upon theſe occaſions; it is called the the *Dies irae* from the two firſt words it begins with, and is juſtly eſteemed one of the moſt beautiful productions of the Gothic ages. When ſung in parts, it is a truly pathetic piece of muſic, and perfectly ſuitable to the occaſion.

The French are much more ſolicitous to be buried in churches than the Engliſh. Such as can afford it, ſeldom chuſe to be buried elſewhere; hence thoſe places are crowded with graves.

It may not be amiſs to obſerve, that this cuſtom of interring the dead in churches and in cloiſters, began chiefly to prevail about the ſeventh century: it was intended as an honorary recompence to thoſe who had built or endowed churches or monaſteries, and often proved an inducement to benefactions and legacies to both. The more conſiderable the donation was, the nearer the donor was laid to the altar.

In the primitive ages of Chriſtianity, they ſeem to have confined burials to church-yards. Prudentius, in deſcribing the honours paid to the memory of the deceaſed, mentions no more than the ſtrowing of flowers and green boughs or leaves over the grave, and pouring odoriferous liquids on the ſtone that covered it: his words are

Nos tecta fovebimus oſſa
Violis et fronde virenti,
Titulumque et frigida ſaxa
Liquido ſpargemus odore.

LETTER XXX.

WHENEVER men ſhall think fit to ſubſtract from Chriſtianity what they have added to it, there will remain but one religion, as ſimple in its doctrine, as pure in its morals. Thus ſays a wit of the laſt century, and thus, I apprehend, will every man ſay that reflects on the ends and purpoſes for which it was inſtituted.

We are now verging towards the cloſe of the eighteenth century ſince its foundation; but we do not perceive in the different ſects into which it is ſplit, any ſigns of a reconciliation in thoſe opinions which conſtitute the difference between them.

Speculative men have often been at the pains of inveſtigating the real cauſes of the religious

religious diſputes that have ſo long divided the world. With all deference to thoſe who have already delivered their opinions on this matter, the moſt efficient cauſe is evidently the multitude of ſuch as take upon them to teach and expound the doctrines of Chriſtianity, ſome of whom ſpend their whole lives in writing notes and comments upon texts, on which, to uſe a vulgar but ſignificant expreſſion, the leaſt that is ſaid is the ſooneſt mended.

They who dedicate their time to ſuch lucubrations, cannot in the nature of things always agree about the explanation of difficult paſſages; but ſuch is the pride and preſumption of men, that when they have once made up their minds, to uſe the modern phraſe, they are ſeldom, if ever, in the humour to unmake them.

Hence they adhere with invincible partinacity to the judgments they have formed, and deem their honour concerned in maintain-

maintaining them at all events and at all riſks.

Were the authors of any particular opinions to ſtand ſingle, were the notions they eſpouſe confined merely to their own perſons, they might with all ſafety pore over texts and make as many comments as they pleaſed; but the miſchief is, that they are never ſatisfied unleſs the public is made acquainted with their ideas, and until they have gained favourers and adherents.

In the mean while, ſuch as differ from them are no leſs eager in the procuring of proſelites, and in defending their tenets with all the warmth and obſtinacy which accompany theological diſputes.

Theſe, unhappily for mankind, are always carried on with more illiberality and violence than any other; and yet, upon cool conſideration, there are none about which men ought to be more indifferent;

ſince

ſince it is clear that before the ſubject which divides them, was brought into litigation, they were, to all the eſſential intents of religion, as ſafe and as knowing as any diſcuſſion of the matter will ever make them.

Well it is known that the more men diſpute about religious points, the farther they wander from the purpoſes of religion: it was given to men as a guide and director of their actions; but they have converted it into an object of ſpeculation.

Were the polemical works that have been written by the divines of all parties, to be conſigned to the flames, it would abridge and improve the ſtudy of divinity by ſo many degrees as it would remove the ſeeds of contention, and leave nothing to be read and ſtudied but what redounds inconteſtably to the benefit of mankind.

It is principally to the Greeks we are to aſcribe the origin of moſt religious diſputations. They were noted of old for their ſubtile and inquiſitive diſpoſition: unfortunately for the world they applied it to objects inſcrutable in their very nature: they treated religion as they had formerly done philoſophy; they made it a buſineſs of endleſs argumentations; they inveſtigated its tenets with the ſame ſpirit, and in the ſame manner as if they had been the categories of Ariſtotle.

But as the theory of true religion is founded on the pureſt ſimplicity, it could not fail ſuffering in ſuch hands: they mangled and diſtorted it into a multiplicity of forms, and put it quite out of its original ſhape.

While the Greeks were taken up with quirks and quibbles, the remainder of Chriſtendom was plunged in confuſion and ignorance;

ignorance; the ſecond reſulted from the firſt, and they both equally co-operated in obſcuring reaſon and defacing religion.

In this ſituation was Europe when the genius of monaſtic inſtitutions began to rear its head. As they appeared the only refuge left to the little knowledge that remained in thoſe barbarous times, they received the kindeſt welcome that people were able to beſtow.

But as imaginary knowledge was copiouſly diffuſed and firmly eſtabliſhed at that æra, it was implicitly adopted by thoſe who profeſt an addiction to ſtudy, and ſoon found its way into convents and monaſteries, and every other receptacle of the learning then in vogue.

Thus they retained and propagated the truths and errors they were taught, and were equally zealous in maintaining both.

As

As ignorance is the parent of obſtinacy, we are not to be ſurpriſed at the tenaciouſneſs with which the various orders of monaſtics have invariably ſtood up for the doctrines and opinions that prevailed at the epochas that were ſo favourable to their foundation.

They were handed down ſucceſſively from one generation to another, and were looked upon as a ſacred depoſit, which was not to be changed or diminiſhed: their preſervation whole and unimpaired ſeemed, in a manner, to be a kind of tacit condition and ſecurity for the exiſtence and proſperity of thoſe who were their teachers and propagators.

Theſe were trained up betimes in a profound acquieſcence and veneration for what had during ſo many ages been the creed of their predeceſſors; this duration, according to their ideas, added ſtrength and authenticity to the eſtabliſhed doctrines,

trines, and they could not with patience ſuffer them to be called in queſtion.

Hence aroſe that inflexibility in religious controverſies, which was the ſource of ſo many calamities in various countries, and ſtill continues to render the different denominations of Chriſtians ſo inimical and odious to each other.

We are not therefore to expect a ceſſation of hoſtilities in the field of religious conteſt, while they who are hotteſt in the diſpute continue to keep their ground. Until the numerous hoſt that goes by the name of regular clergy, is melted down into the common maſs of their fellow-citizens, one of the greateſt obſtacles will remain to the general reunion of all Chriſtians in a ſimilar way of thinking.

Having thus briefly traced the origin and progreſs of the contradictory opinions ſubſiſting among them, and of the anti-

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pathy which they occaſion, I will conclude this epiſtle by adviſing you to run over at your leiſure, the hiſtorical accounts of the principal orders of monaſtics in the Romiſh church. Fleury's eccleſiaſtical hiſtory is perhaps the beſt book you can conſult to this intent.

I uſe the word conſult, as I would not have you dive too deep into reſearches of this kind, while objects of ſo much more importance demand your attention: I mean no more than that you ſhould not be ignorant of the nature of the many inſtitutions that have taken place among men in latter ages: the knowledge of theſe things contributes not a little to let one into the temper of the times, and of thoſe who preſided over them.

The ſpirit which then animated mankind is perhaps more viſible in thoſe eſtabliſhments, than in any of their other public proceedings. The political tranſ-

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actions of one age differ little from thoſe of another; war, peace, negociations, national triumphs or calamities, reſemble each other in almoſt every circumſtance, but thoſe of time, place, and actors; but in the former inſtances we diſcover thoſe peculiarities of character which diſtinguiſh the men of one period from thoſe of another, and ſet, as it were, a mark on the humour and diſpoſition prevailing among them, when they were at liberty to diſplay it.

By the ſame rule, that in private life we ſee more of a man's native turn and inclination in thoſe things which he performs from his own impulſe, than when he ſubmits to coercion or influence, ſo in public acts, the genius and bent of a people is much more completely exhibited in ſuch undertakings as are ſpontaneous, and flow from a general willingneſs and deſire to co-operate in them, than in thoſe

where the tide of ſuperior power and compulſion hurries them along in ſpite of themſelves.

LETTER XXXI.

AFTER ſurveying churches and their contents, and venturing ſome ſtrictures on eccleſiaſtical matters, it will be proper to take a review of other buildings of note.

There are undoubtedly a much greater number of them in Paris than in London. The French often mention this by way of proving its ſuperiority to our metropolis in magnificence and agreeableneſs. An impartial anſwer is, that if Paris ſurpaſſes London in theſe two reſpects, it does not however equal it in its numerous conveniencies, which in the ſcale of ſound reaſoning, are of much more conſequence than the former.

The

The nobleſt monument of architecture in Paris, and in all France, is the Louvre. It truly deſerves the name of a palace: the deſign is royal in all its parts, and wants nothing but to be carried into execution. It is ſurpriſing, that ſince the reign of Philip Auguſtus, who firſt projected this building, it ſhould never have been brought to a final completion. Several monarchs have turned their attention to this object, but none have done it effectually: often has the reſolution been taken to bring the work forward; it has frequently been reſumed with great ardour, but as frequently diſcontinued. Had the reign of Henry the Fourth laſted ſufficiently, it is probable the buſineſs would have been accompliſhed. Lewis the Fourteenth ſeemed for a while earneſtly intent upon bringing it to perfection; but after expending conſiderable ſums, he dropped it for the proſecution of other building ſchemes, none of which ever equalled the grandeur of that which he ſo unwiſely neglected.

Thus from the days of Philip Auguſtus, unto the preſent epocha, a ſpace of ſix hundred years, has the plan of a royal reſidence, in their capital, been left unexecuted by twenty-ſix monarchs, including the preſent.

The completeſt palace in Paris is that known by the name of *Palais royal.* It was erected by Cardinal Richelieu, who bequeathed it to his maſter Lewis the Thirteenth. It has undergone various alterations ſince it was firſt built, and is by ſome connoiſſeurs eſteemed, in its actual ſtate, the moſt commodious and beſt contrived edifice of all the kingdom, though far from faultleſs in point of architecture.

Both the *Louvre* and *Palais royal* contain magnificent collections of pictures. You will find in them ſome of the principal maſter-pieces of the Italian and Flemiſh ſchool.

The ſame may be ſaid of the Luxemburg, which is reputed by good judges the

the moſt elegant and perfect piece of architecture in its kind, and of its dimenſions, of any in Europe.

This beautiful palace was built by Mary of Medicis, the queen and widow of Henry the Fourth. No woman ever experienced more ſurpriſing viciſſitudes of fortune: after the death of that monarch, ſhe ruled France under the title of Regent during ſeveral years, but was at laſt, in conſequence of a variety of civil diſſentions, compelled to fly from that kingdom, and after undergoing ſuch difficulties and hardſhips, as one would naturally think her birth and ſtation in the world could not have failed to obviate, ſhe died at laſt an exile from the realm ſhe had governed, in the abſolute want of neceſſaries.

Of all the public buildings in France, erected for the ſupport and comfort of individuals in want, the nobleſt is that

ſtiled the *Hotel des Invalides*. It is inconteſtably the fineſt military hoſpital in the world, and does more honour to the memory of Lewis the Fourteenth, than any of thoſe inſtitutions which he either founded or patroniſed.

Nor ſhould we forget on this occaſion the perſon by whoſe advice and ſolicitation that monarch was induced to this truly munificent and generous undertaking. It was chiefly to the council, and to the care of Louvois, this uſeful and neceſſary foundation was due. While we therefore condemn his ambition, his arrogance, his unfeelingneſs in other inſtances, let us acknowledge that in this one he made ſome atonement for them; and that if other nations ſuffered from his evil qualities, ſtill he deſerves to be remembered with gratitude by the military claſſes in France.

As my plan does not aim at details, ſuffice it to ſay, that in this ſuperb and im-

immenſe pile, food, rayment, and lodging, are provided for thoſe multitudes who have ſpent their beſt days in the ſervice of their country, or whom wounds and other accidents of war have rendered incapable of earning their bread.

The regulations made for the good government of this great number of men, are allowed to be framed with peculiar wiſdom. They are ſaid to be the joint production of the great Prince of Condé, and the famous Marſhal of Luxemburg: two ſuch names are ſufficient to procure them univerſal eſteem.

The church belonging to this foundation is particularly celebrated for its beautiful cupola, which is pronounced by the majority of connoiſſeurs, to be the moſt ſplendid and magnificent performance of this nature that is extant.

In the neighbourhood of the invalids ſtands an elegant and ſpacious edifice,

deſtined for the education of five hundred young Gentlemen who are intended for the army. It was founded by the late King of France, Lewis the Fifteenth. The rules and ſtatutes by which they are governed are ſaid to have been moſtly compoſed by the late Marſhal Saxe.

At no great diſtance from theſe military foundations, you will find another of a more peaceable nature. This is the edifice ſo well known in Europe by the name of Obſervatory, and for the many curious and uſeful diſcoveries and improvements that have from time to time been made there in the ſcience of aſtronomy.

This is one of thoſe laudable inſtitutions that are due to Lewis the Fourteenth. Happy could he have ſtinted his ambition to excel his cotemporaries in the encouragement and protection of literary genius, and of pacific arts and ſciences.

This

This place deſerves your particular attention from the ingenuity of its contrivance, and the remarkable apparatus it contains for the uſe of ſuch as are employed in aſtronomical inveſtigations.

While we are engaged in this ſubject, let me remind you to procure a liſt of all the conſiderable aſtronomers that France has produced, together with their reſpective diſcoveries. Were you to make out one of the aſtronomers of all nations, whoſe labours have been ſerviceable to the world, and to be at the pains of arranging it in a chronological order, it would prove both amuſing and inſtructive. Nothing tends more to illuminate, as well as to ſatisfy the mind, than a review of the progreſs gradually made in the courſe of ſo many ages, in ſo grand and ſublime a knowledge as that of the ſtructure and order of this ſtupendous univerſe.

The ſquares and large openings in Paris are not ſo numerous as in London; but

they are built with more exactneſs and regularity of architecture, and better decorated. There are only four that merit peculiar notice, the *Place Royale*, *Vendome*, *des Victoires*, and *de Louis Quinze*.

The firſt of theſe was built during the miniſtry of Cardinal Richelieu, under his countenance and encouragement. This great Miniſter was no leſs intent on works of this nature, than on the other objects that contribute to embelliſh a country and improve a nation.

This is a real ſquare, remarkable only from its uniformity, and from being the model of that which our Inigo Jones erected in Convent-Garden much about the ſame time: but this latter is upon a far preferable ſcale; the piazzas are much larger and lighter; had the whole been finiſhed according to his original deſign, it would have proved the moſt elegant ſquare in all Europe.

The

The *Place Vendome* is a decagone of beautiful architecture, far ſuperior to that of the *Place Royale*. It has two openings facing two ſtately porticos of churches, which add ſurpriſingly to its appearance, and give it a peculiar air of grandeur.

The *Place des Victoires* is much in the form of the latter, though not ſo ſpacious nor ſtriking.

The *Place de Louis Quinze* is the beſt ſituated of any, and in its preſent ſtate is undoubtedly the fineſt area that can poſſibly be conceived. On the one ſide is a range of ſumptuous edifices; facing to this the river Seine runs in a parallel line, and on its oppoſite bank are ſeen a row of palaces; on one of the two remaining ſides ſtands the magnificent garden of the Tuilleries, and on the other the *Champs Eliſees*. To build three other rows for the ſake of conformity with the firſt, would at once deſtroy the whole merit of this

this beautiful ſpot; and yet I have heard individuals lament that it was not done.

In the midſt of theſe four places you will find ſtatues of thoſe Kings of France in whoſe reigns they were erected. They are accompanied with fulſome inſcriptions, ſuch as never fail to decorate equally the images of the worſt as well as the beſt Princes.

The *Place Royale* has the ſtatue on horſeback of Lewis the Thirteenth. It was ſet up at the expence of his prime Miniſter Cardinal Richelieu, a man who was no leſs odious than neceſſary to him; whom he hated for abilities the ſuperior weight of which was oppreſſive to his pride, but whom he had ſenſe enough to eſteem on account of their utility to his intereſt.

In the *Place Vendome* is an equeſtrian ſtatue of Lewis the Fourteenth, erected at the coſt of the city of Paris with prodi-

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gious ſolemnity at the commencement of this century. It was the laſt public compliment of the kind paid to the vanity of this oſtentatious monarch. Shortly after that war commenced which proved ſo fatal a reverſe of all his former triumphs, and brought him lower than his ſucceſſes had ever exalted him.

In the *Place des Victoires* is a pedeſtrian ſtatue of the ſame monarch, done at the private charge of one of his ſubjects, in order to teſtify his loyalty and gratitude for benefits and honours conferred upon him. Viewed in this light it does more honour to the erector than to him for whom it was erected. The perſon alluded to is the Marſhal Feuillade, an intrepid warrior, an excellent officer, and one of the nobleſt minded men that France ever produced.

In the *Place de Louis Quinze* you will ſee the equeſtrian ſtatue of the late King, put up

up at the expence of the city of Paris, on the concluſion of the war wherein the arms of France were ſo ſucceſsful in Flanders under the command of Marſhal Saxe.

Forget not to read and to tranſcribe the inſcriptions under theſe ſtatues; though full of flattery, they are alſo full of elegance; they celebrate Kings for what they ought to have been, and give one a perfect idea of what long experience has taught men ſo ſeldom to expect, a great and good ſovereign.

No people ſeem to harbour a greater prepoſſeſſion in favour of their royal maſters than the French. It is certainly a prejudice on the right ſide; men who ſee themſelves well received and treated, will, one ſhould think, endeavour to retain this good-will and kind uſage by acting becomingly. But the French, like lovers whom no ſeverity can cure of their attachment, continue in ſpite of harſh

treatment to idolize thoſe who trample upon them.

How far this forgetfulneſs of injuries may be laudable, is a queſtion that will admit of ſome diſcuſſion: revenge often falls upon thoſe who take it, even when they obtain it according to their moſt ſanguine wiſhes; on the other hand, to bear oppreſſion tamely is an invitation and encouragement to oppreſſors. It is therefore the duty of men to ſteer a middle courſe, neither to ſubmit to tyranny by a paſſive acquieſcence, nor yet to inflict upon it ſuch a puniſhment as ſhall make the remedy worſe than the diſeaſe.

An Engliſh gentleman who travels with a view of preſerving and improving that character, will often meet with occaſions of refreſhing his memory with what he has read and heard of the relative duties ſubſiſting between Kings and ſubjects, of the calamities which an infraction of them has brought

brought upon mankind, of the neceſſity of allying firmneſs and reſiſtance with ſubmiſſion and obedience; he will from the ſight of undue praiſe and unmanly adulation, gather motives to refrain from ſuch meanneſs, and learn to beſtow his attachment, and to expreſs it, upon ſuch occaſions only as deſerve it.

A ſtatue which you will view with pleaſure on all accounts, is that of Henry the Fourth, juſtly the favourite monarch of the French, one whom they never mention without rapture, and propoſe with reaſon to their Kings as the brighteſt example they can follow.

This ſtatue ſtands on the Pontneuf; he is repreſented on horſe-back, armed according to the manner of his time; the figure perfectly reſembles the pictures that remain of him; his countenance is open, firm, and majeſtic, and he appears at once the King and the hero.

In

In the opinion of numbers of Connoiſſeurs this is the beſt equeſtrian ſtatue in France, and inferior to none in Europe of modern performance: Bernini, it is ſaid, uſed often to ſtop and admire it, and ſay the ſtatue was worthy of ſuch a King, no leſs than the King was worthy of ſuch a ſtatue.

Such applauſe from an artiſt who was the Phidias of his day, leaves nothing more to be added: this famous Italian ſculptor often wiſhed that the ſtatue he had projected for Lewis the Fourteenth, might equal that of Henry the Fourth.

A Prince whoſe memory is ſtill revered, and from whom the French had promiſed themſelves much happineſs, was remarkable for the attention he frequently paid to this repreſentation of his royal anceſtor. This was the Duke of Burgundy, grandſon to Lewis the Fourteenth, and father to the late King of France.

Bred under the tuition of the illuſtrious Fenelon, he proved a diſciple worthy of ſuch a maſter. Allowing for ſome foibles which aroſe from an exceſs of religious fervour, he ſeemed born to render mankind happy. Many are the anecdotes recorded of the goodneſs of his heart, and the rectitude of his underſtanding.

Among others it is reported that he took particular delight in the Hiſtory of Henry the Fourth, written by Perefixe, and that he would ſometimes, after peruſing it, take a walk to the Pontneuf, to look at this ſtatue. It is plain from thence that he viewed it as Peter the Great did that of Cardinal Richelieu, not as a Connoiſſeur, but as a Prince, and that his admiration was directed not to the artiſt, but to the hero.

In this manner I ſincerely wiſh you may principally attend to all objects of this kind. It has often excited my indignation

to

to hear gentlemen expatiating for hours on the various beauties owing to the pencil or the chiſſel, without the addition of a ſingle thought on the perſons repreſented.

The real truth is, I mention it with ſhame, that they are often totally unacquainted with the characters of theſe perſonages: I have known men of fortune and conſequence, viſit a gallery of pictures, and betray the groſſeſt ignorance in what related to thoſe whom they repreſented.

I will conclude this article upon Henry the Fourth, with a reflection or rather an admonition, ſaid to have been given to his pupil by the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France in the minority of the late King. Croſſing the Pontneuf one day in the ſame coach, the Regent fixed his eyes very earneſtly on the ſtatue, then taking the young monarch by the hand, I wiſh, ſaid he, you may be as great as Charlemain, and as good as Henry the Fourth.

This complimentary ejaculation reminds one of that, which it was cuſtomary to pay to the Roman Emperors, on their firſt going to the ſenate after their inauguration; this body always cloſed their congratulations with wiſhing them the felicity of Auguſtus, and the goodneſs of Trajan.

It is not unlikely that the Regent, who was a man of wit, as well as of reading, may have taken the hint from this paſſage; certain it is that he could not have produced a more applicable imitation.

I do not remember any other ſtatue of this great monarch worthy of note: there is one over the chief entrance into the *Hotel de Ville*, a place correſponding with our Guildhall, but it is far inferior to that of Lewis the Fourteenth, ſtanding in the court-yard of that building.

Notwithſtanding the indiſputable ſuperiority of Henry in all the qualifications

neceſſary to form a royal as well as an heroic character, ſuch has been the adulation of the times, ſince the acceſſion of Lewis to the throne, that where the former has one ſtatue or buſt, the latter has ten.

The laſt mentioned building is remarkable for ſeveral paintings in high eſteem; it contains ſome very ſpacious halls in the taſte of thoſe that are ſeen in ancient Gothic caſtles; the reaſon of their ſpaciouſneſs is that the King and his court are on great and remarkable occaſions entertained there by the city of Paris.

The area facing this edifice is noted for two very different purpoſes, the execution of malefactors, and the public rejoicings on auſpicious events: it is equally ill calculated for both, but continues to enjoy this prerogative for no other reaſon than becauſe it has enjoyed it during ſome centuries. It is narrow, irregular, and hem-

med in on every ſide by as paltry houſes as any in all Paris.

The moſt elegant, airy, and agreeable opening in this city, is that before the *College Mazarin:* the front of this college is of a ſemicircular form, in the middle ſtands the portico of the church or chapel, which is a very noble ſtructure; the area before it is terminated by the river Seine, on the oppoſite ſide of which ſtands the Louvre.

This college excepted, together with that of the *Sorbonne*, which is a grand edifice, there are none in Paris to be compared in point of architecture to thoſe of Oxford and Cambridge, which are inconteſtably the moſt magnificent univerſities in the world in point of buildings and endowments, if not in every other reſpect.

You will obſerve however, that if our colleges exceed theirs in grandeur, they do not

not equal them in number: Paris alone has upwards of fifty, in ten of which are public ſchools open to all comers, and profeſſors paid by the King, to teach gratuitouſly, not only his own ſubjects, but the natives of all countries.

This you muſt allow is truly generous and royal, and places the munificence of the French government in a very reſpectable point of view. There are indeed ſome ſevere obſervers of things, who imagine that much needleſs encouragement is hereby given to literature, which ought to be confined only to a certain portion of the community, and by no means to be made a common property of all.

Another impropriety in their opinion, is the chuſing of the metropolis for a univerſity: the ſeat of ſtudy and application ſhould always, ſay they, be at a diſtance from that of idleneſs and diſſipation.

There is ſome truth in both theſe allegations. The ſituation of our univerſities is more favourable to the advancement of ſtudents in their learning, nor is it indeed leſs conducive to the making a more conſiderable progreſs in all branches of knowledge, even in perſons of maturer age, on account of the leſs frequent avocations ariſing from paſtimes and diverſions: theſe in capital cities are an inſuperable hindrance to the cloſe proſecution of ſtudy, in ſuch individuals as poſſeſs the means of indulging in them; maturity of years is no ſecurity againſt the perpetual temptations with which men are inviroped on every ſide.

To the remoteneſs of our univerſities from the contagious ſcenes of the metropolis, it is in a great meaſure owing that the liſt of profound ſcholars is not ſo conſiderable at Paris as at Oxford and Cambridge, in proportion to the reſpective number of ſtudents.

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But the French have a ready anſwer to theſe objections. To thoſe who diſapprove of the facility with which individuals of all conditions may obtain a literary education, the reply is, that *didiciſſe feliciter artes, emoilit mores, nec ſinit eſſe feros.* Liberal knowledge refines the underſtanding and poliſhes manners; that no man is compelled to proceed further in this career than ſuits his fortune or his inclination; and, in ſhort, that the more learning is diffuſed, the more there will be found of humanity and politeneſs among men.

To thoſe who object againſt the eſtabliſhment of a univerſity at Paris, they anſwer that the intent of individuals in applying to learning, is not to ſacrifice every conſideration to that alone; mankind is to be ſtudied as well as books, and even preferably to them, ſince it is only with the view of being profitable to the community, and at the ſame time of knowing thoroughly

thoroughly human nature, that ſtudy can deſerve any applauſe: to ſegregate one ſelf from company, and to fly from the haunts of the gay part of the world, is therefore a very improper method of qualifying one ſelf to live in it, with any ſatisfaction to one ſelf any more than to others.

Both theſe replies have certainly their weight: a proof of it is that the French literati are in general much more converſant in the polite and faſhionable circles than people of learning in our univerſities, and that the ſecondary claſſes in France are upon the whole leſs blunt and moroſe than their equals in England.

Another advantage accrues to literary individuals from reſiding at Paris; they contract acquaintances among the great, and retain them more eaſily than if they dwelt elſewhere: it is chiefly, if not only, in a metropolis that patrons are to be met with and effectually ſecured.

It is due to this fortunate circumſtance that patronage is a thing much more common in France than in England: there is hardly in Paris any perſon above the level of vulgar abilities, who has not ſome friend of diſtinction, to whoſe company he is welcome, and who is ready to forward his intereſt upon all occaſions.

Allow me alſo to add, what you will deem, I doubt not, another very ſolid advantage: by frequenting people engaged in the ſcenes of active life, an individual imbibes a principle of activity that inclines him to the like purſuits; he conſequently will ſtrive to make his ſtudies ſubſervient to this purpoſe, he will therefore not confine them to ſubjects merely of ſpeculation; inſtead of burying himſelf as it were in the grave of antiquity, he will direct his attention equally at leaſt to modern times and tranſactions; he will ſurvey what has lately paſt and what actually paſſes on the ſtage of the world, and will

will qualify himſelf to be uſeful to the preſent, as well as to diſcourſe learnedly of former generations.

The ſhameful ignorance of many individuals in modern affairs, while they are at the ſame time critically converſant in thoſe of an ancient date, is often a ſubject of ſurprize to men of abilities employed in buſineſs of public importance. I remember to have heard an old gentleman, a French Refugee, mention that Count Bothmar, Miniſter at the court of Queen Anne, from George the Firſt, while Elector of Hanover, uſed often to teſtify his aſtoniſhment at the little knowledge in modern hiſtory of ſome of the moſt ſenſible perſons in this country, and expreſs at the ſame time his determination to remedy this evil as ſoon as it was in his power: he kept his word; it was principally through his inſtigation, that Prince, after his acceſſion to the crown of this realm, founded profeſſorſhips of modern hiſtory in our univerſities.

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Let me adviſe you to be preſent at ſome of the public acts that annually take place in the principal colleges: the ſubjects of diſputation will ſhew you at once the nature of the learning and philoſophy that are taught in France, and enable you to draw compariſons between the doctrines of their univerſities and of ours: a few afternoons will ſuffice for this purpoſe.

Though, as already obſerved, there are no leſs than ten colleges poſſeſt of public ſchools and profeſſors, yet, to the great honour of the univerſity of Paris, they are conſtantly filled with teachers of prime eminence in their reſpective branches.—But what is much more laudable, theſe inſtitutions are not ſinecures, beſtowed through family connections, or parliamentary intereſt. A profeſſorſhip is a ſerious taſk, and obliges the incumbent to a cloſe and laborious attendance during three parts in four of the year.

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An excellent reſult of this diverſity of ſchools, is that an emulation is produced between thoſe who preſide over them: the warmth and zeal with which it is exerted among the heads, ſoon is communicated to the members; challenges in the field of literature have occaſionally happened between the reſpective ſtudents of theſe different ſchools: the efforts made in theſe reciprocal trials of ſkill, muſt naturally awaken and ſharpen the capacity of ſuch as engage in them.

The number of perſons of extraordinary merit among theſe profeſſors, has been at ſome particular epochas truly remarkable. I have ſeen a liſt of thoſe who flouriſhed in the days of Lewis the Fourteenth, and another of thoſe in the middle of the ſixteenth century: they both contained very celebrated names in the republic of letters: the latter mentioned a particularity well worth recording; in one college alone three men were at the ſame time

time profeſſors, whoſe character yields to none for literary fame. Theſe were Turnebe, Muret, and Buchanan.

A piece of architecture that will ſtrike you is the *Ecole de Chirurgie*. Its conſtruction is of ſingular elegance, and is looked upon to be the firſt in Europe of the kind. But that which ought principally to fix your attention, is the prodigious multitudes that repair to it in order to learn ſurgery, and the uncommon diligence and care with which they are inſtructed in every department of this truly noble and neceſſary knowledge.

A witty foreigner, who came to Paris to improve himſelf in this art, during the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, compoſed a poem on this ſubject, wherein he told that monarch, that in conſideration of the very great number of inhabitants of the countries bordering upon France, who were hurt and wounded in the perpetual

wars

wars he made upon all his neighbours, he ought in conſcience to eſtabliſh a ſchool of ſurgery for each of theſe nations, on their reſpective frontiers, wherein they ſhould be taught it in their own language, and by profeſſors of their own appointment, but maintained at his expence.

Another building of late erection is the *Ecole de Droit*. It is deſerving of inſpection on account of its beautiful ſimplicity. An occaſional attendance on the lectures delivered here on civil juriſprudence, will be of utility in letting you into the general maxims of French legiſlation: you will not ſeldom be entertained with very ingenious diſſertations.

There is a place in Paris which you muſt not neglect ſeeing, not for its architecture and magnificence, it has neither; but becauſe it will convey a forcible impreſſion of the immenſe diſparity ſubſiſting, in ſome very eſſential conſiderations, between

between the two capitals of England and France.

This place is the *Hoſpital des Enfans trouvés*. No foundling hoſpital in the world is burthened with ſuch multitudes. The liſt of births at Paris for the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-ſeven, amounts to near twenty thouſand, that of foundlings to five thouſand five hundred: nine years after, the former liſt amounted to much the ſame; but the latter came to ſix thouſand three hundred: hence may we not infer, that either miſery is encreaſed, or natural affection diminiſhed, in that immenſe city? The laſt is perhaps too often the unfortunate conſequence of the firſt.

I lay theſe two computations before you for two reaſons; the one is to ſhew the conſtant continuance of the evil, which is indeed of long ſtanding, the other to ſhew you its progreſs.

What a proportion of wretchedneſs among the generality of people muſt be found in a place where ſuch a ſhocking one is acknowledged in ſo public a manner! Nothing ſurely but the moſt cruel extremity of want can excuſe parents for conſigning their offspring to the charity and care of the community: nothing therefore can prove more unanſwerably the exceſſive poverty of the inhabitants of Paris, than this woeful abandonment of ſo many of their children, at that moment preciſely when the feelings of nature are the moſt powerful, and when nothing but abſolute inability can be ſuppoſed to prevent her calls from being obeyed.

You will on this occaſion naturally turn your reflections home, and congratulate your country on the ſuperior happineſs of her circumſtances. *Res eſt ſacra miſer*, is a maxim which generoſity and humanity will jointly ſupport: but though we ſhould never exult over the diſtreſſes of our

our fellow-creatures, yet when forgetful of their ſituation, a people impertinently boaſt of advantages which they do not poſſeſs, it is not unfair to repreſs their vaunting, and to convict them of ill-founded pride. In this light, when the French attempt to ſet their condition on a parity of proſperouſneſs with that of the Engliſh, there is no ſort of inhumanity in reminding them of this dreadful derelic-tion of their infant progeny, which muſt effectually ſilence at once all thoſe vain pretences to an equality of circumſtances, which they are ſo apt to inſiſt upon againſt all truth and evidence.

You will lament upon this occaſion the cauſes of this general ſtate of national in-digence; and I hope you will not neglect to inveſtigate them: a volume would hardly ſuffice to detail the many ſources of vexation that abound in this country: every department of public adminiſtration is full of them; complaints are heard from

every quarter; but the voice of the afflicted is in no country leſs attended to, and if lifted too high, ſooner ſilenced.

When you have pondered at leiſure upon theſe things, recollect England and its inhabitants, *fortunatos nimium ſua ſi bona norint.*

LETTER XXXII.

IN the ſuburbs, and in the neighbourhood of Paris, you will meet with a variety of objects to excite your attention, and to furniſh matter for reflection.

Near the river ſide, in a very pleaſing ſituation, ſtands *l'Hoſpital general*, an immence edifice, deſigned for the reception and ſupport of the female poor, and for the confinement and correction of women of ill fame.

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The regulations obſerved in this houſe were framed by the illuſtrious Lamoignon, firſt preſident of the parliament at Paris, one of the wiſeſt magiſtrates, and moſt eloquent men, that France ever produced.

This houſe was founded through his care, and is fitted in the moſt judicious manner, for the purpoſes it was intended to anſwer. It contains prodigious numbers who are kept in admirable order and neatneſs, and employed in the moſt uſeful and profitable manner: the rules are perfectly ſuited to thoſe for whom they were made; ſufficient indulgence and lenity are ſhewn, without relaxation of that neceſſary diſcipline, which is the only preſervative of decorum in ſuch places.

A foundation of this kind is much wanted among us. In caſe it ſhould ever take place, we cannot adopt a better ſyſtem than that which is eſtabliſhed here.

It has long been complained that the puniſhment inflicted upon the miſerable objects of proſtitution that ſwarm in our metropolis, only ſerves to harden them: it cannot be otherwiſe, when we conſider into what brutal hands they are often committed. While ſeverity alone is employed, and neither comfort nor inſtruction adminiſtered to them; while they are permitted an indiſcriminate unregulated aſſociation with each other, the ſame diſorderlineſs of diſpoſition will of courſe remain; and this being the radical cauſe of an irregular and criminal life, we cannot, while it ſubſiſts, expect to retrieve them from the fatal habits which it has produced, and will continue to nouriſh in ſpite of repeated chaſtiſement.

Far different from the methods practiſed in our places of correction are thoſe that are followed in this. It is ſtrictly in many reſpects on the ſame footing as our Magdalen-houſe: the principal difference is, that in this latter none enter through com-

compulſion, whereas in the former force is uſed.

You will not, I hope, paſs over ſlightly what has been ſaid upon this ſubject, as it is incumbent upon every perſon of humanity to contribute to the alleviation of misfortunes, eſpecially in the other ſex. Gentlemen who travel ſhould for that reaſon be extremely attentive to the police of the nations they viſit in all things relating to womankind. An excellent collection of practical rules might be formed out of the various ordinances relating to them that prevail in Europe.

At no great diſtance from the hoſpital juſt deſcribed ſtands one ſtill larger, called Bicetre. It is an ancient edifice of prodigious dimenſions, a receptacle for characters of multifarious denominations, wild and diſorderly young men, perſons who can give no ſatisfactory account of themſelves, or are guilty of mal-practices, de-

frauders, cheats, pick-pockets, criminals condemned to impriſonment, convicts for petty larcenies, in ſhort, the whole catalogue of ſuch as have committed miſdemeanours, for which labour and hard fare are appointed.

There are alſo multitudes of vagrants, idlers, mendicants, and others of that ſtamp, people out of work, and poor of divers ſorts: for all theſe claſſes ſuitable employment is provided, and they are treated proportionably to their deſerts.

Perſons reduced through misfortunes and caſualties to narrow circumſtances, may for a moderate conſideration find a maintenance here. This helps in no ſmall meaſure to people it. Viewed in ſuch a light, it is a very humane and uſeful inſtitution, and with ſingular propriety ſituated near a metropolis where ſcantineſs of means to ſupport themſelves is the fate of ſo many.

The

The laſt order of beings I ſhall mention are ſuch unfortunate lunatics as are either deemed incurable, or have no friends to aſſiſt them.

The ſtricteſt regularity and diſcipline are obſerved in this place. The leaſt mutiny or diſobedience is puniſhed with unrelenting ſeverity. Such is the care taken at the ſame time of morals and behaviour, and ſo much of pains beſtowed in admoniſhing and inſtructing thoſe who are ſent hither for that purpoſe, that many a youth of whom ſmall hopes at firſt were entertained, has been reſtored to a right way of thinking and acting: the knowledge of this is a powerful inducement with parents who have unruly children, or guardians who are troubled with ungovernable wards, to conſign them to the management of thoſe who have the direction of this place.

From

From theſe various cauſes it is always full of inhabitants: their number is generally between five and ſix thouſand.

One of the moſt curious characters that ever inhabited this place was an aſtrologer and fortune-teller. He had long purſued this buſineſs with ſufficient ſucceſs to raiſe a tolerable fortune; but aiming at a large increaſe of it, he hazarded all his worth in the famous Miſſiſſippi ſcheme, and loſt it, as many others did all they had. This was a heavy diſappointment, and reduced him to the neceſſity of reſuming his former trade; in the proſecution of which he retrieved his affairs ſufficiently to purchaſe an annuity, with which he retired from the world, and ſpent his latter days in this retreat.

Few men had experienced a ſtranger variety of viciſſitudes. He was born of French parents at Aleppo, and travelled in the early part of his life in Arabia, Perſia, and

and Indoſtan, of which countries he ſpoke the languages fluently. On his family's return to France, he accompanied them, and received a very genteel education at Paris. He was a man of excellent parts, and of a prodigious memory, but extremely addicted to pleaſures of all ſorts; this diſpoſition proved his ruin. On the demiſe of his parents, he launched into all manner of exceſſes, and in a few years diſſipated a very conſiderable inheritance: he then betook himſelf to commerce, and returned to the ſpot of his birth, where by his induſtry he accumulated a ſum of money ſufficient to enable him to re-viſit the countries he had ſeen in his youthful days; a project which aroſe from a rovingneſs of diſpoſition that accompanied him every where, and often prevented him from ſettling where it would have been highly to his advantage.

He remained however ſome time at Baſſora and Iſpahan, the latter city eſpecially.

cially. This being the capital of Perſia, he might, had he purſued a commercial line, ſoon have enriched himſelf by it, conſidering his perfect ſkill in the language; but he availed himſelf of his knowledge in quite a different manner. Having an extraordinary verſality of genius, he had among other ſtudies beſtowed much of his attention upon books of aſtrology: this made him appear a man of uncommon importance in a country where it is ſo highly prized, and where the ſuperior ſtile in which he had been educated, could not fail to ſet him above the pretenſions of the natives in that ſcience: he ſoon eclipſed the moſt noted among them, and was conſulted by the grandees of the court preferably to all others: he ſhortly acquired enough to return to France, where he bought an eſtate, on the income of which he ſubſiſted a few years very comfortably; but the deſire of travelling ſeized him again ſo irreſiſtibly, that he ſold it, and went to Conſtantinople

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as an agent for, and partner with, a houſe in trade at Marſeilles. When ſettled in that metropolis of Turkey, he rendered himſelf by his addreſs and dexterity ſo acceptable to ſeveral men in power, that through their means he was intruſted with ſome tranſactions that were highly to his intereſt. He left Turkey richer than ever, intending to fix his future reſidence at Paris. Here he lived a long time in the midſt of all enjoyments; but becoming acquainted with ſome people of rank and faſhion, who delighted much in his company, and who were at the ſame time addicted to play, both he and they fell into the hands of ſharpers, who ſtripped them of conſiderable ſums. His companions, who were men of large property, ſtood the ſhock; but he was totally ruined.

This was the moſt fatal ſtroke he ever met with. He was no longer young, and had beſides indulged himſelf in ſuch a manner for a long time paſt, in the luxu-

rious

rious eaſe that accompanies plenty, that he was not fit to encounter obſtacles and hardſhips as formerly. His acquaintance did not forſake him in this calamity; but he had too much of the ſpirit of independence in him to ſubſiſt upon their bounty. He withdrew from them entirely, changed his name and appearance, aſſumed a Turkiſh dreſs, and maintained himſelf awhile by teaching Arabic and Perſian; but this not anſwering his expectation ſo completely as he wiſhed, he determined to aſſociate the profeſſion of an aſtrologer with that of a linguiſt: this ſcheme ſucceeded ſurpriſingly; he was viſited by people of various conditions, the fair ſex eſpecially, whoſe generoſity enabled him to proſper, and to terminate his career in the manner that has been related.

France has often been the ſcene of aſtrological infatuation. In the reign of Charles the Fifth, ſurnamed the Wiſe, and who deſerved the title in other re-

ſpects, the belief in aſtrologers was ſo great, that matters of the higheſt importance were governed by their deciſions. We read in the hiſtory of this Prince that he was at a conſiderable expence in prevailing upon a famous Italian aſtrologer to come and reſide at his court. The fame of this man was ſuch, that not only Charles, but another monarch, was equally deſirous of his preſence: the conteſt was very earneſt between them, but the aſtrologer, doubtleſs for good reaſons, decided it in favour of the former. On his repairing to the French court, he was received like a tutelar genius; a large penſion was ſettled upon him; he was made a member of the King's privy council, and his advice followed in ſome occurrences of great conſequence. This was the famous Piſano, who had already made a ſplendid figure in Italy, at Venice particularly, where he had been conſulted on the affairs of that republic.

We find the ſame credulity prevailing at the court of France full two centuries after. Catherine of Medicis, Queen Conſort to Henry the Second, notwithſtanding her ſubtility and acuteneſs, was the ſlave of aſtrological abſurdities. So powerful was their influence over her conduct in the minuteſt occaſions, that it having been foretold, the perſons and places bearing the name of Germain would be fatal to her, ſhe retired from the Louvre by reaſon of its ſituation in the pariſh of St. Germain, and was at the expence of building elſewhere a palace for her reſidence.

The ſame prejudices infected the perſons compoſing the court of France; the ladies eſpecially did not dare to undertake any thing without having previouſly conſulted their aſtrologers. This folly roſe to ſuch a height, that not only the church, but the ſtate was at laſt obliged to interfere in order to prevent the evil conſequences re-

ſulting from it, by prohibiting the ſale of ſuch Almanacks as contained predictions and prognoſtications that particulariſed perſons and events too audaciouſly and circumſtantially.

It was at this æra the great prophecier of modern ages flouriſhed, Noſtradamus, of whom no leſs than twelve centos of prophecies are extant, all of them together with their author in high requeſt at his day: nor do they ſeem to be forgotten even at preſent; I have heard many of them cited by Frenchmen, warm and zealous for the honour and proſperity of their country. Among ſuch a number of predictions, almoſt as obſcure as riddles, it is eaſy to find ſome not totally inapplicable to events that have happened ſince his time. During a long courſe of years they were conſulted among the French, like the oracles of the Sybils among the Romans.

Henry the Fourth of France, himſelf, was at a time hurried with the croud

along the torrent of credulity: his braveſt warriors were ſolicitous to be informed of their deſtiny, and at the birth of his ſon Lewis the Thirteenth, he commiſſioned his firſt phyſician, who was alſo an eminent aſtrologer, to caſt the nativity of this young Prince.

It ſeems that ſome of the principal phyſicians of thoſe times were almoſt equally renowned for their proficiency in aſtrology: the above-mentioned Noſtradamus was a phyſician, and ſo were ſome of the moſt noted aſtrologers in Europe.

This infatuation continued even to the time of Cardinal Richelieu: during his miniſtry another phyſician made himſelf famous by his prophecies; he had even the boldneſs to foretel the death of Lewis the Thirteenth, and to fix it at the dog-days of the year one thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-one; but the prediction was not verified, and the Prophet was ſent to the galleys.

Nor

Nor were theſe ridiculous notions eradicated many years after. We have a remarkable inſtance of the belief in the influence of the ſtars, and other heavenly bodies, over human events, in the ſolicitude expreſt by the friends and dependents of Cardinal Mazarin, at the appearance of a comet during his laſt illneſs, which happened thirty years after.

The ſame credulity prevailed in the Aſiatic parts of the world. Bernier, the famous traveller, tells us in his account of the Grand Mogul's dominions, that the people of Aſia are ſo prejudiced in favour of judicial aſtrology, that moſt enterprizes of importance are preceded by a careful conſultation of aſtrologers.

Tavernier, another traveller into the eaſt, relates much the ſame of the Perſians, who, according to him, look upon aſtrologers as beings of a ſuperior character, and hearken to them as oracles: their Emperor

has conſtantly three or four of them near his perſon.

The Chineſe do not differ from them in this particular. The deſcriptions of that country and people inform us, that public affairs are frequently determined by aſtronomical obſervations; the Emperor takes no reſolution of great conſequence without having conſulted the conſtellation that preſided over his nativity.

But without going out of Europe, or ſtepping back to the time paſt, the preſent will afford you ſome proofs of the propenſity of men to have recourſe to ſuch as pretend to ſee into futurity, and to aſcertain events by the ſtudy and contemplation of the ſtars.

Almoſt all the Almanacks in Europe are full of prognoſtications: they abſtain indeed from details and particulars; but they

abound with wonderful events to take place in the courſe of the year.

Our anceſtors did not eſcape this contagion; the name of William Lilly ſuffices to remind us of their weakneſs. This celebrated aſtrologer ſurvived the reſtoration upwards of twenty years, during which ſpace he was not idle. But beſides his aſtrological lucubrations, other methods of foretelling futurity were in vogue, particularly that famous one ſtiled the *Sortes Virgilianæ:* Is it not ſurpriſing that ſuch men as Cowley and Lord Falkland, to mention no others, could ſuffer themſelves to pay attention to ſuch fooleries?

I have enlarged upon this ſubject, in order to excite your recollection, how lately it is ſince the reign of abſurdity and prepoſſeſſion has ended among ſome of the wiſeſt people, and how ready they ſtill are to reſume their authority, unleſs prevented

by a reſolute and fearleſs proſecution of truth.

You will, upon impartial examination, find the multitude every where inclined to eſpouſe their cauſe. But what is ſtill worſe, you will find that when thoſe who eſteem themſelves above the vulgar, have once admitted the contamination, it is more difficult to eradicate it from their minds, than from thoſe of the commonalty: theſe are impoſed upon by others, but thoſe are impoſed upon by themſelves, which of all impoſitions is the hardeſt to remove.

LETTER XXXIII.

THE French of all people are the moſt remarkable for ſubjecting to regulations whatever is ſuſceptible of them.

You

You will find this regulating ſpirit exerciſing itſelf in matters of little, as well as of great conſequence. The fact is, that government is fond of meddling with every thing: one would imagine from this they were apprehenſive the people at large were highly diſſatisfied with their meaſures, and ready to ſeize any occaſion to oppoſe them, as oppreſſive and contrary to the general good; but this is by no means the caſe; whatever the diſpoſition of the French may have been at former periods, they are not in the leaſt inclined at preſent to expreſs diſcontent, unleſs manifeſtly ill-treated; and even then they always find out ſome obnoxious individuals on whom to caſt the load of general odium, which at the worſt of times ſeldom reaches higher than ſome of the miniſtry, and hardly ever approaches the throne, or any of the royal family.

This ſolicitude for the preſervation of good order every where, is certainly attend-

ed with a variety of beneficial conſequences: the firſt and moſt eſſential is, that from the conviction how difficult it is to diſturb the tranquillity of the public, one ſeldom ſees diſturbances of any kind; quarrels and fightings among the lower claſſes are inſtantly ſuppreſſed, and much more peaceableneſs prevails in the meetings of the populace than in England.

But without enquiring whether this watchfulneſs of the ruling powers may not ſometimes be carried to an exceſs, equally odious and detrimental to the public, you will in many reſpects find it of much utility, eſpecially in curbing that licentiouſneſs of behaviour, and that audaciouſneſs, to which the vulgar in all countries are addicted whenever they ſee no impediments.

It is principally in their markets and places of public reſort for buſineſs, that this vigilance is exerted: in the midſt of the concourſe that is uſual on ſuch occaſions,

ſions, perſons unknown to the reſt are carefully ſtationed, whoſe duty it is to prevent confuſion and diſorderlineſs, and to ſeize immediately all offenders.

Among other markets, the French have one at Paris for horſes, which is the beſt regulated of any in Europe: the buſineſs is tranſacted in a fair open manner, and no improper advantages given to dealers in that commodity: the buyer and the ſeller are both under the ſtricteſt controul of others, to whom it intirely belongs to ſee that juſtice is done to each of the parties concerned: there is an office in this market, where ſuch as chuſe it may depoſit the purchaſe money; eight days are allowed them for trial and examination of the horſe; if at the expiration of that term any faults are diſcovered and properly verified, the bargain is cancelled and the money returned.

This market is remarkably convenient for its cheapneſs, and for the conveniency

of

of finding at once horſes for draft or ſaddle, or any purpoſe whatever: by thus collecting them into one place, and regulating the manner of ſale, frauds are obviated, as well as the trouble of running to a great number of ſtables and repoſitories in queſt of what is wanted. I have heard ſeveral Engliſh gentlemen wiſh for an eſtabliſhment of the ſame kind in London.

There is at Charenton, a village two or three miles out of Paris, an inſtitution called *Ecole Veterinaire*. It is a ſchool of anatomy and ſurgery for the cure of diſeaſes incident to horſes, and of inſtruction how to uſe and manage them for the preſervation of their health and ſtrength.

Such as are deſirous of acquiring a perfect knowledge of all that relates to this uſeful creature, cannot go to a better place; it is open to all comers; and leſſons are publicly given four days in the week

week gratuitouſly, it being a royal foundation.

There is alſo in this place an hoſpital for ſick horſes on the ſame liberal footing; it is of great utility to the poor and to the inexpert; attendance, food, and medicines being provided for the animal till his recovery.

In the proximity of the horſe-market afore-mentioned, ſtands the moſt beautiful manufactory in Europe for tapeſtry work: it is a large building ſituated on a rivulet called *Gobelins*, from whence it derives its name; the King is proprietor.

I have heard that during the calamities that accompanied the latter years of Lewis the Fourteenth, this beautiful manufactory was ſo neglected, that ſome of the workmen abandoned it, and would, had they met with ſuitable encouragement, have brought their art over to England: it is rather

rather ſurpriſing, that in the midſt of ſo many improvements, this very ingenious buſineſs ſhould have hitherto remained in the hands of ſtrangers; and it is much to be lamented that the attempt to introduce it here, made ſome years ago at Fulham, ſhould have ſo ſpeedily failed.

You will ſee at Chaillot, a pleaſant village on the banks of the Seine near Paris, a noted manufactory of carpets in imitation of the Turkiſh and Perſian: it has been carried to great perfection; but does not, in the opinion of ſuch as underſtand theſe matters, exceed, if equal, the goodneſs and duration of our Wiltons, though it muſt be allowed the patterns and deſigns are uncommonly beautiful.

The glaſs manufactory in the *Fauxbourg St. Antoine* is particularly worthy of your inſpection: it is eſteemed a great curioſity by connoiſſeurs, and is thought to ſurpaſs any thing of the kind.

The

The glaſs manufactory is one of thoſe in which we preceded the French. So long ago as the reign of James the Firſt, an aſſociation of perſons of wealth and diſtinction was formed, who proſecuted it a while to great advantage: the troubles that followed in the ſubſequent reign were probably the cauſe of its being diſcontinued.

There are in France ſeveral manufactories of china; but the principal one is at *Seve*, a village between Paris and Verſailles: it produces moſt exquiſite performances, ſuperior in taſte and richneſs to thoſe of any other country, not only in the eſtimation of the French, but of many others.

To what this ſuperiority is owing, on a ſuppoſition of its exiſtence, is certainly worth an enquiry among thoſe whom it concerns to bring this manufactory to an equal degree of perfection.

Certain

Certain it is that for taſte and delicacy ofdeſign and workmanſhip nothing of the ſort can claim the preference: no coſt is ſpared to give them all the perfection poſſible; the whole buſineſs is carried on at the expence of the King, to whom the manufactory belongs; no other but a royal purſe could defray the charges attending it.

After viewing theſe magnificent manufactories, it muſt, I imagine, naturally occur to you, that England is a country where eſtabliſhments of a ſimilar kind might, and ought therefore, one would think, long ago to have taken place: the general opulence of individuals is far beyond what is known in France; much more effectual encouragement might therefore be expected by thoſe who would engage in ſuch undertakings: why then are they not attempted? This is a queſtion which has often been propounded, and

to

to which very different anſwers have been given.

That which is moſt frequent in the mouth of foreigners, places our ingenuity in no advantageous light: they aſcribe our neglect of the two moſt beautiful of thoſe manufactories, tapeſtry and china, to a want of genius for the invention of models and deſigns, and of diſcernment in the generality of our people, ſufficient to reliſh beauties of ſuch a nature.

But is it not more likely that this neglect may originate in cauſes of quite another kind. May we not aſcribe it to the greater cheapneſs and facility with which we are able to procure each of thoſe articles from abroad, than we could do ſuch as might be manufactured at home? In a commercial nation the ſpirit of calculation preſides over all proceedings, and influences even thoſe who are not engaged in commerce; to make the moſt of one's money is a maxim that pervades all de-

grees: when they perceive therefore, upon due examination, that a much higher price would probably be exacted by our artiſts than is done by thoſe who manufacture theſe commodities abroad, they prefer an importation to an encouragement of them at home, and employ thoſe ſums that would be neceſſary for this latter purpoſe, in branches of buſineſs productive of greater and more certain profit.

That neither taſte nor capacity are wanting in the natives of this country, is ſufficiently evident from the conſtant ſucceſs they have met with in every enterprize which they have been earneſt about, and have proſecuted with alacrity and vigour: it is not only in commercial undertakings they have diſplayed extraordinary talents and activity, they have equally manifeſted both in the cultivation of the polite arts: no people ſurpaſs them in ſolid knowledge; ſciences of every denomination are inconteſtably on as brilliant a footing in England

land as in any part of Europe; works of wit and literature abound in our language, and of late years an emulation has ariſen among our artiſts, that promiſes in time to place them on a parity with the moſt eminent and famous of modern days.

It is not therefore to a deficiency of genius, but merely to an excluſive application to a variety of other more eſſential objects, that we muſt attribute the leſſer attention hitherto paid by the Engliſh to ornamental arts: in thoſe of general utility they rival, if they do not exceed the moſt ingenious nations. It may of courſe be juſtly preſumed, that whenever they turn their thoughts to thoſe branches wherein others have unto this time excelled them, they will with equal care, diligence, and encouragement, be able to make an equal figure.

LETTER XXXIV.

THERE are two large hills, or rather, mountains, near Paris, of which the ſituation is extremely agreeable. The one is contiguous to this city, there being a continuation of houſes to the village that is built upon its principal ſummit.

I have often been ſurpriſed, that conſidering the beauty and extent of the proſpect one enjoys in this place, it is ſo thin of houſes and inhabitants: the firſt are old and mean, and the ſecond conſiſt of poor working people. The few good houſes one meets with, ſhew the advantages of this ſituation, and make one regret that they are not accompanied by a larger number.

The name of this mountain is *Montmatre*; it received this appellation from the

the martyrdom of ſome ſaints on this ſpot in the days of Yore: a ſmall church has been erected here in honour of them, on the porch of which you will obſerve a ſtatue, if I am not miſtaken, of St. Denis, the principal of theſe martyrs, whom the French have choſen for the patron of the kingdom.

He is repreſented holding his head in his hands, in commemoration, I ſuppoſe, of his having, according to a vulgar tradition, carried it in this manner from the place where he was executed, to that where now ſtands the famous abbey which bears his name, a diſtance of about three miles.

Should you lodge in the neighbourhood of this hill, you will find an early morning walk to its ſummit equally agreeable and beneficial. There is a houſe of entertainment, from the windows of which you will enjoy a delightful view, and

where you may breakfaſt either in the French or Engliſh manner.

Caſting your eyes to the South, you have a full and comprehenſive proſpect of the whole extent of Paris: it lies before you in a ſpacious valley, and exhibits, in a clear day, a very diſtinct perception of all the large edifices and remarkable objects it contains. It is altogether as curious and magnificent a ſight as you can well imagine.

Looking towards the North, on the oppoſite ſide of this mountain, you diſcover an immenſe extent of country, richly cultivated, and full of villages pleaſantly ſituated, and of large appearance to the eye: this is owing to the materials of which they are built, which are a very white ſtone, dug out of the quarries, with which this hill abounds, or a chalky ſubſtance that ſoon acquires a hardneſs and conſiſtence almoſt equal to ſtone: ſeen

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at a diſtance, eſpecially in a ſunny day, they loom large, to uſe the ſailor's phraſe, and ſeem to cover much more ground than they do in reality.

In the vaſt plain, at the bottom of this ſide of the hill, a battle was fought during the civil wars on the ſcore of religion, in the ſixteenth century, and won by the famous Ann Montmorency, conſtable of France. I mention this fact on account of ſome particularities relating to this celebrated man, very well worth your recording. He was near eighty years old, and yet had ſtrength of body and mind ſufficient, after receiving eight mortal wounds, to unhorſe him that gave him the laſt. It is of him the ſtory ſays, that a friar exhorting him to death in his laſt moments, think you, ſaid he, that I have lived ſo long without learning how to die.

He was in ſome reſpects an epitome of the times he lived in; magnanimous yet artful, haughty and proud yet ſupple and

condeſcending, bold yet wary, vigilant yet quick and impetuous, brave to an exceſs, yet humble and ſubmiſſive when courage was unavailing; uniting, like moſt of his cotemporaries, intrepidity and fearleſſneſs with bigotry and ſuperſtition; and while ridiculouſly devout on the one hand, ſanguinary and cruel on the other.

It is reported of him, that he would often, during a march, employ himſelf in telling his beads, and while taken up with this method of praying, would coolly give orders for the burning of a village, the cutting off a party, or the maſſacring of a garriſon.

Characters of this kind claim your particular attention: no occaſion ſhould be miſſed of bringing them to notice and recollection; they teach us what to think of human nature better than any formal diſſertations; and it is principally to ſtudy and learn that through practice and obſer-

vation, it behoves you to be diligent and inquiſitive both at home and abroad.

I was acquainted at Paris with a ſurgeon who was a perſon of great knowledge and experience in his profeſſion: he had projected an aſſociation of ſome of the faculty, for the building of a large manſion upon one of the ſides of this hill, for the reception of ſickly perſons and valetudinarians. The declivities every way are gentle, and have an eaſy ſlope; they are interſperſed with pleaſant levels, moſt agreeably ſituated, and upon which ſpacious and airy houſes might be conſtructed, accompanied with ſufficient room for kitchen and pleaſure gardens. But he complained at the ſame time, of the difficulty to perſuade people to make this their place of abode, notwithſtanding they could aſſign no juſt reaſon for their repugnance.

The other mountain that is mentioned in the beginning of this letter, lies three

miles diſtant from Paris. It is the moſt pleaſant walk in the environs of this metropolis: the aſcent is ſteeper than that of the former; but when you have gained the top, an enchanting proſpect offers itſelf on every ſide: the appearance of Paris is truly grand and ſtriking, and to connoiſſeurs in the pictureſque, is preferred to that from Montmatre, though not ſo diſcernible in the detail of particular objects.

Forget not, when you are upon this ſpot, to viſit a convent of hermits, who dwell here in a neat ſolitude, far removed from the noiſe and buſtle of the world: they who founded it, could not have choſen a more healthful nor a more retired ſituation; it is both in the completeſt degree; the river Seine flows at the bottom of the hill, which is ſurrounded with orchards, gardens, and paſture grounds; and the tranquillity of thoſe who reſide on the ſummit is ſeldom interrupted by viſitors.

You will often have occaſion to obſerve, that the curioſity of the people of France is much leſs than that of other nations, eſpecially of the Engliſh. I ought however to explain what I mean by curioſity: of that which relates to anecdotes, characters, and the knowledge of men and tranſactions, no people have more, if ſo much; but they are not ſo active and alert as the Engliſh in their enquiries after thoſe curioſities that gratify the ſight: hence the environs of Paris are not ſo much frequented by the Pariſians, as thoſe of London are by its inhabitants; ſhort and eaſy walks are much more the taſte of the former than of the latter; for this reaſon numbers of agreeable ſpots in the proximity of Paris are hardly known to multitudes in that city: the pleaſurable excurſions of the lower ſort are chiefly to houſes of refreſhment in the ſuburbs, or very little further: ſuch as can afford to pay for a carriage, if they go to a greater diſtance, are uſually more intent on the procuring

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of good cheer and ſocial feſtivity, than on the inſpection of what may be worth going to ſee.

You will be much pleaſed with the little church belonging to this delightful hermitage; it is truly *ſimplex munditiis*, plainneſs and cleanlineſs in perfection, and conveys a juſt idea of thoſe for whom it is deſigned.

They are uſually perſons of middle, and often of inferior ſtations in ſociety, who chuſe to devote themſelves to a ſtricter ſyſtem of life than is practicable in the world.

Unaffected piety and primitive ſimplicity are the principal virtues that adorn this humble retreat: they who inhabit it have entirely bid adieu to all thoſe purſuits that bring men into public notice: ſtudy and learning are quite out of their ſphere; religious exerciſes and devout

books

books excepted, their time is taken up in manual induſtry of various kinds.

This is not merely for the ſake of being employed, and kept out of idleneſs; it is in order to maintain and ſupport themſelves by the labour of their hands, as the ancient hermits were wont to do in the primitive ages of Chriſtianity, when they fled from perſecution, or through motives of ſanctity withdrew to deſerts. Here they could not have ſubſiſted, unleſs they had betaken themſelves to the cultivation of the ground, or occupied themſelves with ſuch work, as either through ſale or exchange procured them food and raiment.

In imitation of this precedent, the reſidents in this hermitage apply themſelves to ſeveral uſeful occupations for the common benefit of their fraternity: they principally excel in knit work: ſtockings, waiſtcoats, caps, and other wear of this ſort, are made here in great perfection, and diſ-

diſpoſed of very advantageouſly on account of their ſuperior goodneſs.

Such is the life that is led by the members of this pious and induſtrious community: their number is about four or five and twenty. Small as it is, one may venture to aſſert it contributes more to the real edification of the public, than many a convent, of which the inhabitants are much more numerous, and think far more highly of their importance.

In the intercourſe which you will occaſionally have with the conſtituents of the various orders that abound in France, you will very ſoon perceive an amazing attachment to that of which they make part, and a prepoſſeſſion in favour of its ſuper-eminence over all the others, that betrays itſelf in ſpite of affected modeſty: it correſponds preciſely with what in the French army they very pertinently call *l'Eſprit du Corps*, and is no leſs productive of warmth

warmth and altercations, with this ſole difference, that while the military decide their diſputes with the ſword, the others decide them with their pens.

Were I inclined, or were it worth while to take up your attention with ſuch matters, I could ſoon make you ſenſible of the uncommon zeal with which theſe claſſes maintain the rank and dignity to which they think themſelves entitled, and how unwilling they are to part with any worldly advantages of which they are in poſſeſſion.

The ſpirit of the preſent age does not militate in their favour; but there was a time when the world thought much otherwiſe; gifts and preſents of every denomination were ſhowered upon them: they have not forgot this time, nor is it fit the world itſelf ſhould, for a multiplicity of reaſons, forget the profuſion of generoſity and diſtinctions with which they

were treated: among other inſtances let it be recorded that a Franciſcan friar compoſed twenty volumes in folio on the privileges belonging to his order.

Far different will you find the diſpoſitions of the good hermits on this mountain: they harbour no views beyond a bare maintenance to be earned by their daily occupations, and not beſtowed upon them gratuitouſly.

Some years ago a very remarkable perſonage dwelt occaſionally in this place. He was by birth a Fleming; he had ſpent the youthful part of his life in the army, and had been preſent at more than ſixty battles, ſieges, engagements, and ſkirmiſhes, without ever receiving a wound: a moderate patrimony falling to him, he ſettled at Paris, where his oeconomy enabled him to live many years in a very decent genteel manner: having originally been deſigned for the church, he had received a ſuitable edu-

education, and being a man of excellent parts, he had improved it in a manner that ſeldom is adopted by gentlemen of the military profeſſion: but he was in all reſpects an exception to the common track and habits of life. On the demiſe of a relation who had patroniſed him during his ſtudies, he found himſelf without a friend: in this ſituation, much more through neceſſity than choice, he entered into a monaſtery, intending to devote his life to ſtudy and contemplation; but the warmth of his temper, and the activity of his diſpoſition, would not permit him to perſevere any longer than the year of his noviciate; at the expiration of which, it becoming neceſſary he ſhould make an option between a convent and the world, he preferred the latter: his circumſtances however were not better on his leaving the former, than they had been on his reception there; but having taken his determination to renounce a monaſtic life, any thing ſeemed better to him, as he often

uſed

uſed to ſay, than ſuch a ſtate of ſervility, equally unworthy of a manly diſpoſition, and inconſiſtent with the natural exerciſe of human liberty. Such were his thoughts of monaſtic inſtitutions.

In the mean time he had no reſources but his education, aſſiſted by a vigorous conſtitution, a good perſon, and a great ſhare of courage; theſe ſoon inclined him to try his fortune in the military line: he entered into the French army, the latter years of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth. As he was a complete maſter of figures, he was employed at firſt in adjuſting regimental accounts; he acquitted himſelf of this taſk with ſo much dexterity, that an old officer who had the principal direction in this department, took him into favour; through his intereſt he obtained a preferment in the corps of engineers, where he remained till the demiſe of the foreſaid monarch.

France

France being at that time at peace with her neighbours, his active diſpoſition would not ſuffer him to remain in tranquillity while any proſpect appeared of gratifying his inclination to ſee ſervice: to this intent, he went to Vienna on the breaking out of a war between the Turks and the Emperor: he was preſent in this war from its commencement to its termination, and was alſo promoted in the imperial army.

He became acquainted about this time with a Flemiſh woman of pleaſure, who made a very ſplendid figure at Vienna; ſhe was handſome, witty, and generous: ſhe had been kept by a perſon of very high rank; but on his being ſlain at the battle of Belgrade, ſhe reſolved to return to her country with the acquiſitions ſhe had made in the profeſſion ſhe had followed, which were very conſiderable: ſhe determined at the ſame time to abandon it,

and to enter into wedlock with the firſt man of good character on whom ſhe could place her affections. As notwithſtanding the freedoms of her former life, ſhe had always conducted herſelf with honour and diſcretion in other reſpects, and had always been conſidered as a perſon above the vulgar, ſhe met with many offers, but none that ſuited her inclinations: it was preciſely at this period, that our Fleming formed an acquaintance with her: fortune was more propitious to him than to her other wooers; ſhe received graciouſly his addreſſes, and conſented to accept of his hand; but while preparations were making for this union, the footing of friendſhip and intimacy ſubſiſting between the two lovers, occaſioning them to conceal no ſecrets, and to emboſom themſelves freely to each other, it came out at length, in conſequence of theſe mutual confeſſions, that they were brother and ſiſter.

Such

Such a diſcovery, you may imagine, put inſtantly an end to all matrimonial purſuits on either ſide: but they had conceived ſo tender a regard for each other, that they reſolved never to ſeparate, and never to marry. They returned together to the place of their nativity, which was in the neighbourhood of Liſle: here they lived ſeveral years in great harmony and happineſs; but going one day to ſee a review there, an officer of diſtinction who was preſent, on perceiving her, immediately accoſted her, and deſired ſhe would favour him with a few minutes converſation. She directly recollected he was the man who firſt had the poſſeſſion of her heart, and of her perſon: ſhe was at that time waiting woman to a lady of great quality, in whoſe good graces ſhe ſtood high, and from whom ſhe entertained very flattering expectations; but this adventure, the conſequences of which became too viſible for concealment, obliged her to quit her patroneſs. Her lover, after doing as much for

her as his circumſtances, which were then very moderate, would permit, was obliged to leave her in order to attend his duty. Neceſſity compelled her to hearken to the addreſſes of a man of high rank, and great opulence, with whom ſhe lived ſome time in much ſplendour, till involving himſelf in ſome of thoſe intrigues that were formed againſt the French government, during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, he was arreſted and ſent to the Baſtille. This broke off their connection; but her beauty and charms were ſuch, that it was in her power to chuſe whom ſhe pleaſed.

Among her many admirers was a young gentleman of a very amiable character and agreeable perſon. He was ſon to a farmer general, who in order to give him every accompliſhment that could adorn an immenſe fortune, had determined he ſhould make the tour of Europe. He was preparing to ſet out for the court of Vienna, when our young lady was deprived of her

her friend in the manner that has been mentioned.

He had long nouriſhed a violent paſſion for her: on hearing of this accident, he waited upon and made her a tender of his purſe and perſon; they were accepted, and it was concerted between them, that ſhe ſhould accompany him in his travels diſguiſed in mens cloaths.

Arriving at Vienna he paid his reſpects to the French Ambaſſador, to whom he had letters of recommendation: as he was frequently at that Miniſter's houſe, he contracted an intimacy with his principal Secretary, a handſome young gentleman of polite addreſs and uncommon abilities: being often together, this latter had many opportunities of ſeeing his friend's companion; it happened that he very well knew her firſt lover, and was privy to their connection.

Looking at her ſtedfaſtly one day, he took the liberty to tell her, that ſhe was the very picture of a lady with whom he had formerly been acquainted: the emotion ſhe felt, and her bluſhes, convinced him ſhe was that very perſon; ſhe was ſo overcome, that ſhe confeſt it, intreating him however to be ſilent: as no third perſon was preſent, the matter remained concealed for a time; but the aſſiduity of his viſits excited the ſuſpicion of her friend: he became by degrees ſo jealous as to tax her with infidelity: her ſpirit could not brook ſuch an accuſation; ſhe took a formal oath of her innocence, and inſtantly left him, with a proteſtation never to admit of his company.

This affair brought on a very ſerious expoſtulation between the two gentlemen. A duel inſued, wherein the farmer general's ſon received a very dangerous wound, which though not mortal, confined him a long time, and proved very difficult to cure.

cure. On his recovery, he was obliged to return home in compliance with his father's injunctions.

Mean while the Ambaſſador's Secretary acted a very generous part with the lady: friendſhip ſoon ripened into love, and ſhe lived ſome time with him in much union; till being diſpatched to the French court on buſineſs of great ſecrecy and importance, he was kept there much longer than he had expected.

His income being too narrow for the ſubſiſtence of both at ſuch a diſtance, indigence obliged her to ſubmit to the importunities of a Bohemian Baron, whom ſhe attended to his ſeat: at the expiration of no long time he died, not however without leaving her a conſiderable legacy.

Her next friend was a nobleman of the ſame country, who left her ſhortly after, on his marrying a lady of great fortune

and uncommon generoſity: ſhe inſiſted, on her marriage, that her huſband ſhould beſtow a very conſiderable ſum of money on his miſtreſs.

She now returned to Vienna in very proſperous circumſtances, intending henceforth to live regularly. But a relation of her lately married friend followed her to that city. He was a widower, and poſſeſt of an ample fortune, in the prime of his age, agreeable in his perſon, and highly engaging in his manners: ſhe avoided him at firſt, in order to oblige her laſt lover, who had beſought her to give him no encouragement; but his attachment to her was ſo ſtrong, that ſhe could not reſiſt it; he promiſed in caſe of iſſue by her, to ſettle all he was perſonally worth on herſelf and progeny; ſuch an offer ſhe could not refuſe.

They did not however live long together: going a volunteer in the imperial army,

army, he loſt his life, to the great grief of his miſtreſs, whoſe affection he had won, and well deſerved, by the nobleneſs of his behaviour.

It was after this event that preparing to leave Vienna, ſhe was accidently diſcovered by her brother in the manner that has been related.

Such had been her adventures when her firſt lover recognized her after many years abſence. He told her that his affection had never cooled, that he had on that account refuſed a variety of advantageous matches, reſolving, if ever he ſhould meet her again, to make her an offer of his hand.

Such an affectionate declaration was anſwered on her part by an ingenuous acknowledgement of what had befallen her ſince their ſeparation: but he generouſly confeſt himſelf the original cauſe of all her frailties,

frailties, and that it was his duty to make her all the reparation in his power, for the injuries ſhe had ſuffered upon his account.

A firſt paſſion, it is ſaid, ſeldom is totally extinguiſhed: ſhe felt its revival ſo forcibly, that ſhe could not give him a denial. On conſulting with her brother, he did not heſitate to give his conſent, and they were in a few days married.

Some time after the war broke out between France and the Emperor on account of the ſucceſſion to the crown of Poland: through her huſband's intereſt her brother had a commiſſion in the French army, and ſerved during the whole war, at the end of which he obtained a penſion.

In the enſuing hoſtilities againſt the late Empreſs Queen, he ſerved in Germany and Flanders under Marſhal Saxe.

About this time he became heir to an uncle, who, like himſelf, had experienced a variety

a variety of adventures; but had lately been concerned in ſome ſucceſsful privateers out of Dunkirk. This inheritance, though not very large, was abundantly ſufficient to enable him to live independent. He retired from the ſervice, and ſettled at Paris with an intent to ſpend there the remainder of his days.

His ſyſtem of living was to deny himſelf no reaſonable pleaſures; but to dedicate moſt of his time to reading and to the company of the learned and ingenious: he was peculiarly fond of ſolitary walks, and often would paſs whole days alone in wandering about the fields and rural places adjacent to Paris. It was in one of theſe excurſions that being on this mountain, and falling into converſation with one of the hermits of this place, he conceived the deſign of making it occaſionally a place of retreat from the croud and buſy ſcenes of life.

In this deſign he was by no means governed by any fit of devotion; his religion was manly, and tinctured with no ſort of bigotry; but he delighted in variety, and his retirement being voluntary, and laſting no longer than he pleaſed, it was a mere paſtime to him, who had gone through ſo many diverſities in life, to conform for a few days to the rules enjoined to ſuch as chuſe to dwell with the good people of this hermitage.

His intention was, on his demiſe to be interred in the burying-ground of this convent, with this inſcription on his grave-ſtone, *hic jacet Umbra, Cinis, nihil.* This epitaph it ſeems was formerly made for himſelf, by Cardinal Barberini, brother to Pope Urban the Eighth. This Cardinal was raiſed to that dignity much againſt his will, by the expreſs command of his brother, a man of great wiſdom, wit, and learning, who conferred this exaltation upon him, in reward of his extraordinary humility;

humility: but this good man would not relinquiſh the humble manner of living of his former condition, which was that of a Capuchin Friar; he continued it to the laſt, and ordered the above words, and no others, to be ingraved on his tomb-ſtone.

Our Fleming would ſometimes jokingly ſay, that having on ſeveral occaſions been bountiful to the Capuchins, he thought himſelf intitled to borrow an epitaph from one of their order.

I will not adviſe you to follow the example of this gentleman, any farther than to take as many walks to this charming ſpot as you can make it convenient; you will find it equally conducive to health and to pleaſure.

I make no doubt that both thoſe motives co-operate in the inducing even of pious people to retire ſometimes to the convent of this ſolitude: add to this that the

the price is very reaſonable; at the rate of about two ſhillings a day you are provided with decent board and lodging, for as long a term as you pleaſe; but not ſhorter than a week.

I have heard that a citizen of Marſeilles engaged in commerce, and intending that his only ſon, then at Paris with a relation, ſhould follow the ſame occupation, placed him, during ſome time, among the brethren, as they are called, of this fraternity, that he might be thoroughly inſtructed in the art of knitting, which, as before obſerved, they practiſe in perfection: his motive for doing this, was that in caſe his ſon ſhould, in his future voyages to the Levant, happen to fall into the hands of the corſairs of Barbary, he ſhould be able either to maintain himſelf, or to work for his maſter, without being condemned to drudgery and hard labour.

This reminds one of a cuſtom that formerly prevailed in many parts of Europe,

and is not yet totally diſuſed in Germany and Hungary. As exorbitant ranſoms were exacted for perſons of diſtinction taken in battle, it became cuſtomary to teach them in their youth ſome mechanical buſineſs, the better to conceal their rank, and leſſen the demands of thoſe into whoſe hands the chance of war had thrown them.

To this day there are Hungarian gentlemen ſufficiently expert in handicrafts to paſs themſelves off for perſons of low degree: they find this, it ſeems, of no ſmall ſervice when priſoners among their neighbours the Turks, either in procuring their liberty at an eaſy rate, or in working for their ſubſiſtence.

Beſides the church and convent of Hermits, there are upon this mountain a number of little chapels dedicated to the commemoration of the paſſion and death of Chriſt. From this circumſtance the mountain has received the name of Mount Calvary;

Calvary; it is known alſo by that of *Mont Valerien*.

In each of theſe chapels is repreſented, in wooden ſculpture, ſome particulars of that event; the figures are coloured, and large as life.

It is not unuſual in Paſſion-Week, and eſpecially on Good-Friday, for numbers of devout people to viſit theſe chapels, and to pray before them on their knees with much humility and fervour. Some, I think to have heard, perform theſe devotions bare-foot.

This cuſtom of kneeling at prayer, is one of the moſt inconvenient that were ever introduced by way of mortifying the human frame; the hours that are ſpent in this incommodious poſture are many in convents, ſeminaries, and even in ſome colleges.

It does not appear upon cool conſideration, that devotion is either excited or aſſiſted by placing the body in a diſagreeable poſition; we can only therefore attribute this practice to the abſurd exceſſes in devotional practices, to which men of more zeal than ſenſe and diſcretion have in all ages been more or leſs addicted.

In religion, as well as in other matters, the wiſeſt do not always dictate: forms in worſhip, like faſhions in dreſs, are often the reſult of private caprice; with this difference, that when eſtabliſhed they laſt longer, and acquire weight and reverence in proportion to the length of their duration.

People of diſcernment muſt know that climate, conſtitution, and the various incidents of human life, ſhould be conſulted in all thoſe *exteriorities* of religion that are indifferent in their nature.

Among theſe is evidently the poſture obſerved in praying. The Jews of old prayed ſtanding as they do at preſent; the primitive Chriſtians kneeled much leſs than at this day; on Sundays and great feſtivals it was poſitively forbidden them to kneel at all; whence we may reaſonably infer that it was not enjoined them to kneel much at any time: the travellers who have written accounts of Abyſſinia, tell us that according to the forms of Chriſtianity eſtabliſhed there, which are known to be of great antiquity, people ſtand during divine ſervice: in Ruſſia, kneeling is little in uſe; it is even by many held in deteſtation, as imitating the ſoldiers of Pilate when they derided Chriſt.

All theſe particulars concur in proving the impropriety of continuing ſo needleſs, and at the ſame time ſo irkſome a practice: but preſcription authoriſes it, and the imbecility of mankind in ſubmitting to ſtill

more abſurd uſages, has long been proverbially notorious.

Formerly the warmth, or rather the violence with which people purſued the ſtudy of bodily mortification, was much more diffuſed and general than at this day. Eccleſiaſtical writers of the fifth century mention a ſect that went by the name of *Nudipedales*, from their going barefooted.

This abſurd method of doing pennance has frequently been imitated, and is not intirely diſuſed. The progreſs of enthuſiaſm is rapid, but that of reaſon ſlow, and it often requires the wiſdom of ages, to deſtroy the effects and overcome the influence of a few years of folly.

LETTER XXXV.

IN the proximity of the mountain which was the ſubject of my laſt, ſtands, not far from the borders of the Seine, a very ancient houſe, wherein I have been told that a lady reſided, whoſe hiſtory is ſo remarkable, that I will venture to make it the ſubject of this letter.

This lady was of the illuſtrious houſe of Foix, and was at a very early period of life married to the Count of Chateau Briand, a man of a moroſe and jealous diſpoſition. In order to ſecure the fidelity of his wife, he kept her confined in a remote part of Britanny, far from the public ſight and enjoyments of the world.

His friends often repreſented to him, that he took a very wrong method to obtain

tain the end he propoſed, and that unleſs he could gain poſſeſſion of her heart, the impriſonment of her body was no effectual ſecurity.

But the auſterity of his manners and the obſtinacy of his mind acted in concert againſt all remonſtrances: he continued to debar his young wife from the amuſements in which her rank and fortune claimed an indulgence, and watched all her motions with a ſolicitude that rendered her ſituation extremely painful and mortifying.

Thus, inſtead of a huſband, he aſſumed the part of a jailor, and laid himſelf open to the malevolence and reproaches not only of his wife's relations, but of his own, who ſcrupled not to tell him, that ſoon or late he would meet with that puniſhment for the ill treatment of his wife, which he ſtudied principally to avoid.

In the mean time her beauty and her ſufferings were in every body's mouth; the firſt was a theme upon which the world expatiated without end, and the ſecond was a ſubject of univerſal indignation.

She lived at an æra when a turn to intrigue began to characteriſe the court of France: the prince who wore that crown was in the flower of his age, of a gay temper, and a moſt amorous diſpoſition.

Before his reign the ladies had been uſed to a ſolitary and retired life, and were never ſeen at court, unleſs upon very ſolemn occaſions: but the pleaſures and diverſions which he delighted in were of ſuch a nature as neceſſarily to put an end to this ſtrictneſs of conduct: feſtivals and paſtimes were introduced of a more elegant form and contrivance than had hitherto been known; dancing and muſic were their inceſſant concomitants, and had lately

lately been poliſhed and improved in a manner that rendered them far more deſirable objects of cultivation than heretofore: the graces and attractions of ſocial intercourſe had received no leſs an addition through the ſpirit of politeneſs ariſing from a more extenſive increaſe of genteel and liberal education.

This revolution in the manners of the French, was chiefly brought about by the character of their king, Francis the Firſt. Had he been only remarkable for a turn to pleaſure, perhaps his example would not have been ſo powerful; but poſſeſſing a number of great qualities, whatever he did commanded attention; and precedents, which in princes of inferior talents would have had little influence, in him were ſtriking and perſuaſive.

Such were the times wherein this lady was deſtined to make her appearance, and to act a part which has made her memory remarkably conſpicuous.

She could not remain ſo perfectly concealed as not occaſionally to be ſeen and admired. In proceſs of time the fame of her beauty did not fail to reach the court, together with the hard fate which it occaſioned. At a magnificent feſtival given by the king, while he was employed in viewing the ladies aſſembled on that occaſion, an officious courtier told him, there was an object in his dominions much more worthy of his admiration than any one in that aſſembly; he then informed him of every thing relating to the counteſs, and repreſented her in ſuch a light, as excited in the king the ſtrongeſt impatience to ſee her.

But this was not an eaſy matter to compaſs: beſides that the kings of France were not then ſo abſolute and omnipotent as now, nor the courtiers ſo pliant and acquieſcing, he did not chuſe to have recourſe to ſuch methods as might alarm and offend the pride of his nobility. He there-

therefore endeavoured to entice the huſband to bring his wife to court by the moſt flattering and ſpecious invitations; but the count, who ſaw his maſter's drift, alledged various pretexts for keeping her at a diſtance: he deſcribed the counteſs as a haughty and imperious beauty, full of arrogance and diſdain for all other women, and her humour ſo unconciliating, that ſhe would be apt to diſoblige by her behaviour the ladies with whom ſhe muſt of courſe aſſociate. He alledged at the ſame time, that ſhe was a woman of very rigid morals, who led an uncommonly ſtrict and regular life, and entirely diſapproved of the innovations introduced at court; that ſhe never would therefore be prevailed upon to reſort to ſuch a place, much leſs to reſide there.

But the king paid little regard to theſe repreſentations, of which he rightly conjectured the real cauſe. He inſiſted, in a polite engaging manner, that the count ſhould

ſhould not refuſe to grace his court with one of the moſt brilliant ornaments his kingdom could boaſt; that it would be ungenerous and unjuſt to debar his wife from ſo agreeable and innocent a gratification, as that of ſeeing the ſplendour and magnificence which accompany royalty.

The count, who did not dare to diſoblige his ſovereign by a poſitive refuſal, feigned a perſuaſion of the juſtneſs of what he had urged, and aſſured him of a compliance with his requeſt on the firſt opportunity; but reſolving at the ſame time never to perform his promiſe, and foreſeeing alſo that he could never appear in the royal preſence without fulfilling it, he determined to baniſh himſelf totally from court, as the only means of preſerving untouched that treaſure, which he perceived the king coveted with ſo much ardour.

But he was by unforeſeen circumſtances compelled to alter this determination: his preſence

preſence at court became abſolutely requiſite, and no pretence was left him for denial.

It now remained to frame a plauſible excuſe for the abſence of his wife. He was ſummoned by the king to fulfil his promiſe, and cenſured by the courtiers for refuſing, in conformity to their example, to bring his wife to court, were it only in compliance with the requeſt of ſo gracious a maſter. But the exhortations of the king, and the cenſures of his courtiers, were equally fruitleſs; he ſtill continued immoveable in his reſolution.

He had, previous to his ſetting out for Paris, contrived to place his wife in the hands of a relation, who was abbeſs of a female monaſtery. The pretext was a vow he had made in a fit of illneſs, to dedicate a certain portion of time to prayer and retirement, in caſe of recovery.

A great

A great variety and long continuance of buſineſs had prevented him from performing his vow; but though he had not found leiſure to do it, yet, as he thought it incumbent upon him to avoid remiſſneſs in ſo ſerious a matter, he had charged his wife to act upon this occaſion in his ſtead, and to dwell in a pious retreat during the ſame ſpace which he had himſelf intended.

This excuſe was by no means reliſhed at court, where by this time his exceſſive jealouſy had rendered him an object of particular notice. As courtiers uſually delight in tormenting ſuch characters, knowing that in this inſtance they would correſpond with the intentions of their maſter, they vied with each other in deviſing methods how to perplex the count, and defeat the meaſures he had taken to inſure and to juſtify the abſence of his lady.

After

After employing a variety of means to no purpoſe, an accident happened, which ſupplied them with what proved a ſufficient motive to authoriſe her immediately repairing to Paris.

The king had given a ſplendid entertainment: one of the diverſions conſiſted in running at the ring, which was very faſhionable in thoſe days, as conducing much to render horſemen expert in hitting their mark. The count, who partook of it in company with others, had the misfortune to fall from his horſe: the hurt he received was not conſiderable; but as it diſabled him from continuing the ſport, and obliged him to withdraw, an idea ſuggeſted itſelf to one of thoſe buſy promoters of miſchief that always abound in courts, which appeared quite appoſite to the deſign of bringing his wife out of her retreat.

This officious courtier had a ſiſter in the convent where this lady reſided: he wrote her directly word that the count had been thrown from his horſe and lay in a very dangerous condition. On receiving this intelligence, the counteſs thought it incumbent upon her to ſet out immediately for Paris, in order to attend him in his illneſs.

The king, who had been appriſed of the whole ſtratagem, did not let ſlip ſo favourable an opportunity of gratifying the wiſhes he had ſo ardently formed. He carefully viſited the count every day, and teſtified much concern on account of the accident that had befallen him.

It was during one of thoſe viſits that happened the arrival of the counteſs. It was announced by a ſervant, whom ſhe had diſpatched a little way before her, in order to appriſe her huſband, and to prevent

vent his ſpirits from being diſcompoſed by a ſudden appearance.

The ſervant had not long delivered his meſſage, when the counteſs and her attendants entered the court-yard of the houſe. As the count was too lame to quit his couch, the king told him in the friendlieſt terms, that he would upon this occaſion wait upon her in his ſtead.

He accordingly received her in his arms on her alighting from her horſe, and conducted her very reſpectfully to her huſband, whoſe aſtoniſhment at all that he ſaw may be better conceived than expreſt.

From the motives which ſhe alledged for this unexpected journey, it clearly appeared that ſhe had been impoſed upon; but it was too late to remedy this impoſition: the count would willingly have remanded her to confinement; but the king, who was ſtruck with the moſt violent

lent paſſion for her, had already obviated all deſigns of this nature, by pre-engaging both at a magnificent feſtival.

The count heſitated in what manner he ſhould proceed in this critical conjuncture. He was conſcious that he held his wife by no tie of affection: this being the only ſecurity againſt the temptations that would aſſail her in a court ſo full of gallantry, he ſoon concluded that ſhe would yield to them.

Had the rival whom he dreaded been any other than a royal one, he would readily have extricated himſelf from his apprehenſions; but there lay the difficulty; he ſaw it was inſurmountable, and that coercive meaſures could no longer be adopted.

He now for the firſt time had recourſe to lenity, and endeavoured by gentle inſinuations to make his wife ſenſible of the peril

peril her virtue ſtood in, while expoſed to the allurements of ſuch a court, and that to quit it inſtantly was the only ſure means of preſerving her reputation.

But this was a language to which ſhe was not in the leaſt diſpoſed to hearken. She had ſeen enough to wiſh to ſee more, and to feel reſentment at his having ſo long precluded her from ſeeing any thing. To the fervour with which he expreſt his wiſhes that ſhe would not delay her departure, ſhe oppoſed a ſullen ſilence and a countenance full of diſpleaſure and indignation.

Mean while ſhe was ſurrounded by crouds of female courtiers, impatient to behold one, of whom they had heard ſo much, and of whom they expected to hear ſo much more.

The king's frequent entreaties of her huſband to bring her to court, and the

latter's reluctance to comply, together with the contrivance uſed for the effecting of this purpoſe, were become things of notoriety.

Francis was known at the ſame time to be a man not eaſily repulſed in his intrigues, and who would leave no methods untried to ſucceed with any female whom he thought proper to attempt.

The counteſs was therefore viewed in the light of a future favourite. The homage paid her in conſequence of this general expectation, could not fail proving highly acceptable to a young and beautiful woman, ſenſible of the ſuperiority of her charms, of the power which they procured her, and of the ſlavery from which they would obtain her a releaſe.

Full of theſe flattering ideas, ſhe ſaw with ſcorn the humble endeavours of the count to perſuade her to put herſelf again into

into his poſſeſſion. Regarding him as a tyrant, from whoſe fetters ſhe could not too ſoon be relieved, her whole behaviour indicated that ſhe rejoiced in the thoughts of parting with him, and that whatever might be her future deſtiny, it could not be worſe than he had made it.

In the full conviction of the inutility of all his efforts to obtain her concurrence with his deſires, and entertaining no doubt of her compliance with thoſe of her royal lover, he took the reſolution, as he could not prevent the diſgrace awaiting him, not however to give it the leaſt countenance by conſenting to remain any longer at court.

Having taken this determination, he departed abruptly, and returned to his country ſeat in Britanny, leaving his wife in the enjoyment of that liberty he had ſo long denied her, and free to diſpoſe of herſelf as ſhe might think proper.

His departure, though expected and not lamented by the counteſs, ſtill placed her in a ſituation equally novel and critical.

She was ſtrongly adviſed by a relation of the count, to follow him without a moment's heſitation, this being the only means to ſecure his good will and opinion, which otherwiſe ſhe muſt be conſcious would inevitably be forfeited; that however flattering the proſpect of being a royal miſtreſs might ſeem, ſuch an elevation, if it was one, muſt be purchaſed with the loſs of her character; and was at beſt but precarious, eſpecially with a prince of ſo voluptuous a diſpoſition as Francis was known to be: that ſhould he cool in his attachment, a caſe by no means unlikely, ſhe would then experience the double mortification of not only loſing the poſſeſſion of that prize, but of being conſtrained at the ſame time to renounce the world, and paſs the remainder of her days in repentance and obſcurity.

Had

Had the count retained any place in her affections, theſe arguments might have had ſome weight; but her diſlike of him was ſo deeply rooted, that they were totally ineffectual.

Among the acquaintances ſhe had formed ſince her arrival at Paris, was a young widow in the bloom of life and beauty like herſelf, and who had alſo experienced the miſeries of being married to a jealous and ill-tempered huſband. The ſimilitude of their deſtinies had produced a reciprocal ſympathy between them, which had ſpeedily ripened into great friendſhip and confidence.

To this lady ſhe unboſomed herſelf without reſerve on the difficulty of her ſituation. But far different was the advice of this laſt from that which had been given her by the former.

This young widow was near of an age with the counteſs; but having ſince the demiſe of her huſband, which had happened about two years before this period, lived at large, and enjoyed unconfined liberty, ſhe was much more experimentally converſant with the world.

She adviſed the counteſs never to admit the idea of returning to her huſband, with whom ſhe could hope for nothing but impriſonment, and a renewal of all the horrors ſhe had ſuffered, together with an infallible addition of ſtill more, to revenge himſelf for the diſquietude and vexation he had undergone from the journey ſhe had taken to Paris, and her appearance at court without his previous knowledge and conſent.

As to the royal predilection, which was repreſented to her in ſuch alarming colours, ſhe ſincerely congratulated her

upon

upon ſo auſpicious an event, which, whether of long or of ſhort duration, a woman of ſenſe and ſpirit would always be able to convert to her advantage. It was a poſt at which numbers of females of high rank aſpired in private with much fervour, whatever repugnance they might affect in public: were ſhe fond of her huſband, or had any reaſon for being attached to him, ſhe would be the laſt woman to hold ſuch a diſcourſe; but as their characters were wholly incompatible, it were folly to ſeek for happineſs where it could not poſſibly be found.

She added, that ſhe had herſelf been lately ſolicited upon honourable terms by ſome men of very high diſtinction; but that the dread of making an unfortunate choice had kept her from liſtening to their addreſſes; that apprehenſions of this kind would, ſhe believed, long, if not ever, operate againſt a matrimonial connection, upon the indiſſolubleneſs of which ſhe

could not look without fear and trembling.

Her counſel was therefore to bid an everlaſting adieu to all notions of re-union with the count, and to exert all her powers in order to captivate the heart of her royal lover, from whoſe well-known generoſity and nobleneſs of mind ſhe had every thing to expect.

Such a Prince was not to be confounded with others in the ſame ſtation: excluſive of his rank and power, he had an innate dignity of diſpoſition, which rendered him amiable for his own ſake; ſhe frankly acknowledged, that were he to offer himſelf as a lover, ſhe would accept of him with open arms; but that not being the caſe, ſhe exhorted her, as a ſincere well-wiſher, to act as ſhe would do herſelf, were it in her option, and not to ſuffer herſelf to be deterred from a connection with that monarch, by the intereſted or groundleſs repreſenta-

repreſentations of falſe friends, or weak-minded people.

Whether this young widow ſpoke her genuine ſentiments, or was ſecretly deputed to uſe theſe arguments, certain it is they made an impreſſion upon the counteſs: ſhe threw off the timidity which had hitherto accompanied her, and aſſumed that air of freedom and gaiety which characteriſed the court of her lover.

In the mean time his paſſion for her daily gained ground. She was unqueſtionably one of the moſt charming women of that age: her perſon was enchanting, her humour affable and obliging; ſhe was ſenſible and ſprightly, and her manners were ſoft and engaging: all theſe were invincible attractions to a Prince in the flower of his age, and of a moſt amorous conſtitution.

But

But independent of the propenſity, common to all men, to admire handſome women, Francis had a delicacy far above the uſual level: beauty alone was not ſufficient to ſubdue him; he looked for ſomething beyond what met his eye; where internal merit was wanting, internal charms loſt their effect; his admiration was that of a man of genius and diſcernment, and he was never known to beſtow his attachment upon a meer outſide.

The counteſs was preciſely ſuch an object as his wiſhes coveted: the more he ſaw her, the more cauſe he found to be enamoured; her native modeſty gave unaffected luſtre to the livelineſs which ſhe gradually acquired by her tranſplantation into the gayer ſcenes of life: he attentively obſerved her conduct in a ſituation ſo new to her perceptions and feelings, and conſtantly diſcovered in every part of her behaviour a cautiouſneſs and diſcretion, that convinced

convinced him ſhe was a woman of exquiſite ſenſibility and refinement, as well as of the moſt lovely frame.

He now determined to make her the object of his particular aſſiduities. He laid himſelf out to obtain her good graces with all that polite earneſtneſs which is ſo pleaſing to the ſex, as it convinces them that they are no leſs reſpected than beloved.

Far from preſuming on the exaltedneſs of his ſtation, he behaved with as much courteſy and gentleneſs, as if he had been a private individual, ſuing with many others for the happineſs of her ſmiles and favour.

Such a lover as this was not formed for a repulſe; he ſoon perceived what he ardently deſired, that her partiality for him was equal to his predilection for her, and that he ſhould enjoy what he was wont to

ſtile

ſtile the greateſt of all mortal felicities, the pleaſure of being loved for his own ſake.

It was not, however, till after ſome time that ſhe yielded to his courtſhip. The merit of her conceſſion was enhanced by the unfeigned difficulty with which ſhe prevailed upon herſelf to make it. Her ſtruggles with the ſtrictneſs and regularity of her former life were accompanied with a gracefulneſs that ſhewed they were void of all affectation.

Francis was now in poſſeſſion of the jewel he had ſo long and ſo diligently ſought. He expreſt a ſatisfaction in having acquired it, that did the higheſt honour to his taſte: not only the monarch, but his whole court were of opinion that he could not have choſen a more amiable partner of his ſofter moments.

She became in a ſhort time the abſolute miſtreſs of his heart, not ſo much by exerciſing

erciſing thoſe blandiſhments with which nature has ſo powerfully adorned the ſex, as by diſplaying a dignity of ſentiments, and a propriety of behaviour, that captivated her royal lover's mind, and excited his eſteem no leſs than the others invited his attachment.

What equally delighted Francis, and conciliated all his court, were the gentleneſs of her deportment, and the moderation ſhe diſplayed in her conduct: people of all degrees met with the kindeſt treatment from her, and ſhe behaved ſo courteouſly upon all occaſions, that it was evident ſhe was ſolicitous in the higheſt degree to give no cauſes of offence.

This meekneſs and condeſcenſion were the more laudable, as the king grew continually more fervent in his affection, and teſtified ſuch a conſideration for her, that it was plain ſhe had only to aſk to be gratified.

But

But ſhe made no improper uſe of her credit; her family was already ſo reſpectable, that it could diſgrace no honours that might be conferred upon it. She had three brothers, as brave men as any in France. The king promoted them to high commands, in which they greatly ſignalized their valour and capacity.

In the mean time the count, her huſband, was not abſent from her remembrance. Notwithſtanding his ill uſage of her, ſhe thought it incumbent upon her, to ſoften as much as lay in her power the mortification of having ſlighted him for another. As ſhe poſſeſſed an abſolute power over the king, ſhe prevailed upon him to make the moſt advantageous offers to the count, by way of atonement: the higheſt poſts in the realm were laid before him; but he rejected them with ſcorn, and forbad any mention of the counteſs in his preſence.

He

He lived at a time when a ſenſe of honour was ſupremely prevalent over all other conſiderations. Though proud and aſpiring, he was not of a temper to ſacrifice his character to any views of ambition: "The higher the king means to raiſe me, ſaid he, the more notorious will be my degradation, were I to accept of his offers."

So reſolute a refuſal highly chagrined the counteſs. She had written him a ſupplicatory letter, intreating him to reflect like a man of ſenſe on the impropriety of the connection that had once ſubſiſted between them, ſo much to the uneaſineſs and the unhappineſs of both; that a ſeparation therefore was what each party ought reaſonably to deſire; that a reconciliation being now impracticable, it were the wiſeſt thing they could do, to forget each other; that nevertheleſs it was her earneſt wiſh to contribute to his welfare to her very utmoſt; conformably to this in-

tent, ſhe had induced the King to ſhew the value and reſpect he entertained for him, by conferring upon him the moſt honourable and moſt important employments in the realm.

But the reſentment of the count was proof againſt this and all the ſubſequent ſollicitations that came from her: they were frequent and preſſing; the counteſs, who was a woman of equal underſtanding and feeling, laboured with all her might to convince him, that what had happened was beſt for both: but her endeavours were loſt upon a man who, though he acknowledged his love was extinguiſhed, yet as violently aſſerted that his reſentment would always ſubſiſt.

In the mean time the affection of Francis continued with unabated warmth; ſhe was the principal object of his cares and pleaſures, and the ſum of his happineſs was centered in her.

Such was the ſituation of the counteſs, when Francis left her to put himſelf at the head of his army in Italy. No expedition ever proved more unfortunate; he was defeated, wounded, and taken priſoner at the battle of Pavia, and carried to Spain, where he was kept in cloſe confinement by his rival and bitter enemy, the Emperor Charles the Fifth.

The news of this misfortune was near proving fatal to the counteſs. Her attachment to Francis rendered her inconſolable, and ſhe gave herſelf up to grief and lamentation.

But what made her condition truly deplorable, was the power that was now devolved into the hands of ſome perſons who envied her aſcendency over the mind of Francis, and reſolved to avail themſelves of this opportunity of wreaking their revenge, on account of ſome diſappoint-

ments their ambition had met with from her ſuperior credit.

Among theſe was the Ducheſs of Angouleme, mother of Francis, an ambitious and haughty woman, who had long borne with ſecret indignation the influence of the counteſs, and had ſtrove by indirect means to leſſen it.

This unhappy lady was intirely abandoned through fear of the ducheſs, now become regent of the kingdom in the King's abſence and impriſonment. Seeing herſelf expoſed to her inſults and ill-treatment, without any proſpect of protection, ſhe withdrew from the public world, and retired to a country manſion, in order to conſider at leiſure, what meaſures were moſt adviſeable to adopt.

But ſo diſtreſsful was her ſituation, that no one dared to expreſs any commiſeration for

for it, or ſeem inclinable to adminiſter any aſſiſtance to her.

In this doleful ſtate ſhe was viſited by a religious old lady, who had often, during her proſperity, waited upon her with warm exhortations to forſake the court, and retire to penance and ſolitude.

This good old lady renewed her ſollicitations with much earneſtneſs, and prevailed upon her to ſhut herſelf up in a nunnery, with an intent to remain there for life: but an alarming decline of her health, together with the exhortations of thoſe who preſided there, ſoon altered her determination. The Abbeſs was a well-meaning woman, ignorant of the world and of human nature; the confeſſor of the convent was a rigid moraliſt, unacquainted with mankind, and wholly taken up with exerciſes of devotion. In a fit of illneſs which ſeized the unhappy counteſs, they aſſailed her weak-

ened faculties with ſuch terrifying deſcriptions of the enormity of the ſin ſhe had committed, in forſaking her huſband, that as ſoon as ſhe was ſufficiently recovered, ſhe reſolved to go and throw herſelf at his feet and crave his forgiveneſs.

Some friends, who had more experience and diſcretion, endeavoured to diſſuade her from truſting herſelf into the hands of an enraged man, who had often vowed the ſevereſt vengeance againſt her, and who was known to be of a violent and vindictive diſpoſition; but the reſolution ſhe had taken, was too firmly fixed to be ſhaken by all the arguments that could be uſed: Life, ſhe ſaid, was become a burden, of which ſhe cared not how ſoon ſhe was ridden; if her huſband did not think her fit to live, ſhe was willing to die.

In theſe penitential ſentiments ſhe ſet out for the ſeat of her huſband, careleſs of the conſequences of ſo hazardous a ſtep.

He received her with a ſternneſs and ſilence that foreboded no happy iſſue to her undertaking. She was conducted to a remote part of his manſion, and lodged in a dark room, of which the hangings and all the furniture were black.

In this gloomy retirement ſhe was waited upon by perſons who had orders to hold no converſation with her. She was ſupplied with books that treated of death and a future ſtate, and bid to read them with particular attention, and prepare herſelf for another world.

She was kept in the dreadful expectation in what manner all this would end, during the ſpace of ſix months. At the expiration of that time, the count came one evening and informed her that on the following day ſhe was to die. Next morning accordingly he entered the room, accompanied by eight men with maſks on, and two of whom were ſurgeons: they ſeized

the unfortunate lady, tied her to the bed, opened the veins of her arms and legs, and left her in that condition to expire.

Such was the revenge of this inhuman wretch upon a lovely woman, whom his cruel treatment alone compelled to hate and forſake him, and who nevertheleſs, touched with repentance, had committed herſelf to his mercy.

It is not meant that he ſhould have received her again to his arms; but that indifference and neglect would have been a ſufficient puniſhment to a woman of her character, and would have afforded ample ſatisfaction to his reſentment.

This horrid murder did not long remain concealed. The perpetrator was obliged to fly his country and live many years in exile, in order to avoid the wrath of his wife's lover, from whom he had no mercy to expect. Francis, on hearing of the

the tragical end of his beloved counteſs, vowed the moſt ſignal vengeance on the guilty, and diſpatched inſtantly ſome reſolute men to carry it into immediate execution wherever they could find them: but they were too well concealed; reſearches were vain, and he had not the pleaſure of making this juſt ſacrifice to her memory.

LETTER XXXVI.

AT the diſtance of about three miles from Paris, in a pleaſing ſituation on the banks of the Seine, ſtands the palace of Conflans, belonging to the archbiſhops of Paris.

The purity of the air, and beautifulneſs of the country in its neighbourhood, induced the late archbiſhop to make it his reſidence during great part of the year. It was here that he enjoyed

himſelf with thoſe friends and intimates that adhered to his ways of thinking; it was here that he held thoſe conſultations with them, the reſult of which brought him more than once into difficulties; and it was here that perſons who had favours to aſk, always found him in the moſt acceſſible and complying humour.

The apartments of this palace are uncommonly neat and elegant; though grand and becoming the rank of the poſſeſſor, you will obſerve a decent dignity throughout them, that will pleaſe you the more on reflecting that you are in the houſe of an eccleſiaſtic, in whom exterior greatneſs ought peculiarly to be tempered with moderation.

This agreeable place lying ſo near Paris, I would adviſe you frequently to make it an object of your walks: you are always ſure of an entrance into the gardens, which are laid out in a very noble and judi-

judicious taſte, and are for that reaſon much reſorted to and admired by connoiſſeurs.

You will find here another place equally eaſy of acceſs to individuals of decent appearance: it is a large and ſpacious gallery, adorned with a prodigious number of portraits of the moſt eminent perſonages in modern times.

A very conſiderable proportion of them are unqueſtionably originals, and give an exact reſemblance of the perſons repreſented: but from an injudicious deſire to extend the catalogue of theſe repreſentations, they have exhibited a regular ſeries of the kings of France, ever ſince the foundation of that monarchy.

This you will readily conceive is in a great meaſure the work of fancy, and juſt as much to be depended on, as the cuts

cuts and images that are ſo commonly found in books of hiſtory.

It is difficult to aſcertain the date from whence performances of this kind begin to claim authenticity; but I believe that portrait painting was very little in vogue before the middle of the fifteenth century.

Since that epocha people of eminence have been tranſmitted to poſterity in pictures and in prints; you may therefore rely with tolerable certainty on thoſe you will find in that gallery, that were done for ſuch as have lived ſince that time.

I knew a young gentleman who had a remarkable talent at catching a reſemblance. He had been at the pains of copying every picture in this gallery, the truth of which he looked upon as probable. His intention was to imitate what Cornelius Nepos reports of the famous

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Atticus, to write a ſummary account under every picture of the perſon whom it repreſented, in the ſame manner that Roman had done under the images adorning his hall.

This young gentleman was a native of Poland: his family ſeat was in the neighbourhood of Cracovia: his deſign was to enrich it with the copies he had drawn: it was, he ſaid, an edifice of moderate dimenſions, but good architecture, built upon a plan ſketched by a very ingenious artiſt, formerly employed by the great king Sobieſki, and whoſe papers had been purchaſed by his father, who found this plan among them.

Of all the travellers I ever met with, this was the moſt diligent in his examination of all that was worth notice, and the moſt laborious in tranſcribing whatever deſerved it. Being at the ſame time

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an excellent draftſman, nothing eſcaped him in the whole circle of architecture, painting, and ſculpture. He had a collection, entirely the work of his own hands, of all that he had ſeen remarkable in theſe branches, accompanied with critical notes and obſervations: thoſe which I ſaw were very pertinent and judicious: French was the language he uſed; he wrote and ſpoke it in great perfection, having indeed learned it from his cradle.

But he was far from being a mere virtuoſo. Among other compilations, he had written memoirs and anecdotes of every perſon of note whom he had ſeen or heard of in his travels. This he valued beyond all his other performances, as it contained characters actually exiſting, and with ſome of whom he expected, in proceſs of time, and in the courſe of affairs, to form more or leſs either a perſonal acquaintance or a correſpondence.

Were

Were I to propoſe a model for your imitation, I could not chuſe a more happy one than this young gentleman, one whoſe failings were ſo few, and whoſe good qualities were ſo many.

He excelled particularly in the diſtribution of his time, and in the rare art of loſing no opportunity of improving. I have known him return from what to others would have proved a bare party of pleaſure, with a ſtock of information gathered from every quarter whence it could poſſibly ariſe on ſuch an occaſion. He would on ſetting out look as it were into every one that compoſed it, and ſettle his plan of examination accordingly: the ſcholar, the ſoldier, the prieſt, the lawyer, the merchant, the man of buſineſs, every profeſſion, in ſhort, afforded him materials of ſpeculation and knowledge. In order to be never out of the way of improvement, he made it a rule always to travel in a public vehicle, where he might have a chance

a chance of converſing with a diverſity of characters, and where I have often heard him ſay more inſtruction was to be obtained than by any other method.

I am convinced by my own experience that he ſpoke truth. People that meet on a travelling party, being uſually total ſtrangers to each other, and meeting together for the firſt and laſt time, are not fettered by any apprehenſions of what may happen from the diſcourſe that paſſes among them: they indulge themſelves therefore without any reſtraint, and ſpeak of men and things with a latitude and freedom, which they would not dare to uſe elſewhere.

Excluſive of French and Latin, of which this young gentleman was complete maſter, he was thoroughly converſant in German and Italian: but he frequently complained of the loſs of time he had incurred in the perfecting himſelf

in languages, which he called the neceſſary evil of a good education, lamenting that the polite nations did not agree in ſelecting one only for univerſal uſe, diſcarding every other, and confining it to its own country.

How far he was juſtifiable in this idea would bear too long a diſcuſſion; but nothing is more certain than that as it is much better to be acquainted with things than with words; abſolute neceſſity ſhould alone induce us to aim at the reputation of a linguiſt.

Pleaſures being the requiſites of youth, our young gentleman was no enemy to them. In truth he was formed to give as well as to enjoy almoſt every kind of liberal entertainment. He had a fine taſte for muſic; he ſung well, and played ſkilfully on the harpſichord; he danced moſt gracefully, was an admirable horſeman, and uncommonly expert at fencing.

I men-

I mention theſe various accompliſhments by way of proof that indolence alone ſtands in the way of their acquiſition. With a temper that led him to the purſuit of a variety of diverſions, which neceſſarily conſumed much time, he yet found means to repair that loſs, by employing the remainder with an activity and judiciouſneſs that made ample amends for all juvenilities. Have I not a right after this to ſay, *abi tu et fac ſimiliter*, go thou and do likewiſe.

In the frequent retroſpects which all men are wont to take of their youthful days, there are perhaps none that afford us more delight than thoſe that preſent to our remembrance a brilliant and amiable character. Such was that which I have been deſcribing; and ſuch, I hope, yours will prove in the memory of thoſe who may hereafter have occaſion to remember you.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVII.

AMONG thoſe objects of curioſity that employ antiquaries, may be counted the famous abbey of St. Denis, ſituated about four or five miles from Paris.

The monaſtery itſelf is a new building, very noble and ſpacious. Nothing remains of the old but a gate-way, the upper part of which is ſaid to have been the reſidence of the celebrated Suger, Abbot of St. Denis, and principal miniſter of ſtate under Lewis the Sixth, and his ſon Lewis the Seventh. He was by this laſt, during his abſence on a cruſade, appointed regent of the kingdom, and died about the middle of the twelfth century, with the reputation of being one of the moſt upright ſtateſmen, and profound politicians, that ever held the reins of

government in any country. Poſterity has confirmed this opinion; the French writers unanimouſly agree in ſpeaking of him in terms of the higheſt praiſe. Forget not to viſit the apartment of this extraordinary man; it will give you an idea of his own modeſty, and of the ſimplicity of the times he lived in. Some letters of his remain upon ſtate matters, a peruſal of which will afford you juſt notions of the ſpirit of that age.

The church of this abbey is a magnificent monument of Gothic architecture. It is kept in excellent order. In it are the tombs of many of the kings of France; but ſuch as are anterior to the beginning of the fourteenth century, are to be conſidered only as cenotaphs, or empty monuments erected to their memory.

You will obſerve a ſtriking diſparity between the perſonages interred in this church, and thoſe that lie buried in Weſt-

minſter abbey. The French would hold it a profanation, to mix the aſhes of their kings with thoſe of any others but of the royal family, unleſs their merit were of ſo eminent and ſublime a nature, as in a manner to command ſo ſignal a mark of diſtinction.

Kings and princes of the blood excepted, you will find only two men of the rank of ſubjects buried in this church. The one is Bertrand du Gueſelin, conſtable of France in the reign of Charles the Fifth, at whoſe feet he lies interred.

No man could have a juſter claim to this honour; until he was placed at the head of the French armies, thoſe of England had proved invincible. It was he that retrieved the military honour of France, and recovered that monarchy from the fatal degree of humiliation, to which it had been reduced by the victorious arms

of our third Edward, and his ſon the Black Prince.

The other is the ſtill more celebrated Turenne, Marſhal General of the armies of France; a title with which none but he and the late Count Saxe were ever decorated.

The character of Turenne was truly great. His mind was elevated above every conſideration that occupies the generality of mankind; his ideas, his diſcourſe, his manners, diſplayed an innate grandeur of ſoul, that inſpired eſteem and reſpect. His talents in the field were not ſuperior to thoſe he manifeſted in council; he was equally ſagacious in pointing out wiſe meaſures to miniſters, and in directing military operations. It was fortunate for Lewis the Fourteenth, that he had ſuch a general to ſupport his cauſe in the civil wars that aroſe during his minority.

Let

Let us not forget the words ſpoken by the great Montecuculi on hearing of his death, *Il faiſoit honneur a l'homme*, He was an honour to man. This was a conciſe but pathetic elogium of a rival, whom he alone was thought able to oppoſe, and of whoſe worth no man was a better judge.

It has been ſaid, that had Marſhal Saxe not profeſt the Proteſtant religion, he alſo would have had the honour of being interred at St. Denis. Certain it is that his ſervices to France were rendered at a very critical time, and that if he had been unſucceſsful at Fontenoy, it would in all likelihood have proved a moſt fatal day to that monarchy.

There is not that profuſion of tombs in the church of St. Denis as in Weſtminſter abbey; but thoſe in the former ſeem in better preſervation. They will afford you a full morning's amuſement.

The treaſury of this abbey is one of the greateſt curioſities of its kind in all Europe. It does not enter into my plan to ſpecify the rarities and antiquities with which it is repleniſhed; I ſhall only ſay that, allowing for a few fabulous or doubtful objects, it is altogether a very entertaining ſight.

It once had the honour of being under the care of one of the moſt learned men of his age, the celebrated Mabillon, who was a conventual of this abbey, and entruſted with the buſineſs of ſhewing this treaſury: but growing weary of mixing truth with falſehood, as he expreſt himſelf, he petitioned to be releaſed from this employment.

Of all the royal houſes in the proximity of Paris, there is none to compare in point of ſituation to St. Germain. It is an ancient venerable building, not unlike the caſtle of Windſor: the apartments are grand

grand and roomy, and quite worthy of a royal gueſt. Several of them are ſtill inhabited by deſcendants of ſome of thoſe families that followed the fortunes of our James the Second.

The gardens of this fine old palace exhibit a beautiful model of the taſte of the laſt century. They are a curious mixture of the French and Engliſh manner of laying out gardens at that time: the bowling-green ſtill ſubſiſts, that was made for our dethroned monarch, who, like his brother Charles, took particular delight in that amuſement; it retains its original name, being called *le Boulingrin* to this day.

But what will pleaſe you beyond all the reſt, is a terraſs highly elevated, and of ſingular conſtruction, from whence there is a proſpect of twenty miles extent, richly variegated by every object which the nobleſt landſkip can offer to the eye.

It is obſerved by the French that no place in the neighbourhood of Paris, is ſo much reliſhed as this by the Engliſh. This does not ariſe from any deſire of communication with the deſcendants of their countrymen who fled from England at the time of the revolution, or thoſe who have ſince left it from ſimilar motives: with fugitives from this iſland on political principles the Engliſh are not in the leaſt fond of aſſociating: it ariſes from the ruralneſs of the ſituation, the beautiful aſpect of the country around, and the remembrance it inſpires of ſome delightful ſpots in our own iſland, not far from our metropolis, by the reſemblance it bears to them.

I have heard that James uſed to ſay, that his brother of France not being able to reſtore him to the poſſeſſion of his kingdoms, had, however, by way of comfort, beſtowed upon him the beautifulleſt ſpot of his own dominions to dwell in.

If

If at any time you ſhould be inclined to ſpend a few days in a country receſs, you cannot chuſe one at once more elegant and rural. It is in the vicinity of a foreſt cut into a variety of walks and avenues, which all terminate in ſome agreeable object.

In this foreſt, I have been informed, Lewis and James uſed frequently, in the latter days of this monarch, to enjoy the cloſe of a Summer's afternoon in walking together. Though the firſt was inconteſtibly much ſuperior in abilities to the laſt, yet their characters correſponded in many eſſential reſpects: they were attached with equal bigotry to the religion they profeſt, and equally averſe to all others; they were no leſs under the influence of a perſecuting ſpirit, abhorrent of toleration, and ready to propagate their belief by violent and coercive means: nor were they diſſimilar in their notions of government; they were both immeaſurably fond of unlimited

ed power, and impatient of the leaſt controul: in the private concerns of life they were far from unlike; James in his younger days was noted for having his miſtreſſes as well as Lewis: they agreed alſo in ſome meritorious reſpects; they were kind huſbands, and fond parents; they were gentle maſters, and good-natured men within their domeſtic circle. Theſe qualifications were a ſufficient ground for mutual liking and confidence, eſpecially when we conſider how much they were perſonally intereſted in each other's proſperity.

LETTER XXXVIII.

YOU will undoubtedly pay more than one viſit to Verſailles, Marli, and the other royal houſes in the vicinity of Paris.

A deſcription of them does not belong to the ſubject I have in view, which is to make

make them ſubſervient to reflections of more importance to a thinking man, than the mere ſight of buildings, and of the curioſities which they contain.

Purſuant to this intention, I would wiſh you to conſider, while you view this immenſe palace, that it was erected againſt the advice of all impartial judges, on a ſpot where nature was forced, where the elements were unfavourable, and in the defiance and contempt as it were of far preferable ſituations, at a little diſtance and almoſt in ſight, inviting him, in a manner, to forſake the worthleſs favourite of which he was ſo fond, as one of his wittieſt courtiers would often take the liberty of ſtiling this coſtly palace.

The ſums expended to render this place habitable, would have defrayed the charges of building half a dozen on more advantageous ground.

But

But ſuch was the temper of that Prince; he delighted in carrying difficult projects into execution: could he have repreſſed this diſpoſition, the good which he did might have been doubled, and the miſchief leſſened by half.

It cannot be denied that he rendered Verſailles the moſt ſumptuous and magnificent palace in the world: you will find in it a profuſion of grandeur and magnificence, which you muſt not expect to meet any where elſe: its gardens and other appurtenances are in the ſame ſtile, and diſplay a richneſs of fancy and deſign, which, though not in the taſte of the preſent age, never fail to excite the admiration of ſuch as favour it moſt.

A ſenſible foreigner of diſtinction, who viſited France at the time that Lewis the Fourteenth was conſtructing this palace, and laying out the gardens, told ſome of his courtiers, that though their maſter was king

king of the earth on which he built, yet he would be an exile from it for want of water, alluding to its ſcarcity at Verſailles: this obſervation ſuggeſted the thought of bringing it from the Seine near Marli, which is at three miles diſtance, by means of the ſtupendous machine that bears the name of this place.

When you have ſatisfied your curioſity in theſe and the various houſes erected by that monarch, recollect the luxurious and expenſive life which he led in them, while his ſubjects were oppreſſed with all kind of miſery; recollect the ruinous pomp he affected about his perſon, and that his houſehold troops alone amounted to an army, no leſs than ten thouſand men, a number greater by three thouſand than that of England after the peace of Ryſwick. But at this you will not be ſurpriſed, when you have been told, the liſt of his domeſtic attendants at Verſailles, including all ranks

and

and capacities, conſiſted of twenty thouſand individuals.

Such a multitude, for the moſt part of uſeleſs people, maintained for the ſake of oſtentation, accounts at once for the diſtreſſes of many others. This was a waſte of treaſure unpardonable in a prince, who was perpetually wanting money to ſupply the numerous channels of private and public expence in which he was conſtantly engaged. It ſhowed that, notwithſtanding the wiſdom with which he is ſaid to have preſided over his affairs, he was eſſentially deficient in one of the moſt important branches of government, the adminiſtration and œconomy of his finances.

No King of France, nor of any other country, has been ſo highly praiſed and exalted by his people as Lewis the Fourteenth: he doubtleſs deſerved greatly both of them and of mankind in general in a variety

variety of reſpects; but does the good, or the miſchief he did, preponderate?

I was acquainted with a French abbé of great reading, obſervation, and ſagacity, who ſeemed to have ballanced this account with much faithfulneſs and impartiality. Every page of his manuſcript was divided into three columns; at the head of the firſt was written the word uſeful, of the ſecond, uſeleſs, and of the third, pernicious. This was manifeſtly a fair and judicious arrangement. He had peruſed a multiplicity of books and manuſcripts, and conſulted many perſons well verſed in arts and buſineſſes, in order to form his account upon juſt grounds, and to venture on no deciſion without good and ſufficient authority. I will add to this, that he was in a ſituation fully adequate to an attempt of this nature. He was a man of good family, poſſeſt of adecent patrimony, and a genteel ſinecure benefice, which enabled him to enjoy life in a very comfortable manner.

He

He was no bigot: though very diſcreet and guarded in his converſation, it was eaſy to perceive that he was no ſlave to any ſect. He frequented all companies, and took notes of all that he had heard remarkable: he ſhewed me two thick quartos of what he had ſelected from them. He underſtood Engliſh perfectly, and had read almoſt every good writer in our language. He uſed often to ſay, that an Engliſhman grafted upon a Frenchman, or a Frenchman upon an Engliſhman, was the beſt compound in nature. He was a mortal foe to nationality of every ſort, and a warm friend to merit whoever had it: this led him to aſſociate freely with ſtrangers, and to rebuke with great earneſtneſs thoſe among his countrymen who undervalued other nations.

Such a character you will allow to have been peculiarly adapted to the taſk I have mentioned. He was turned of fifty when I knew him, and had commenced it more

than ten years before; but he did it quite at his leiſure: he was hurried by no preſſures; he indulged himſelf in a diverſity of paſtimes, and finally did not intend it ſhould come forth while he was living: he meant it as a legacy to the world, by way of proof that he had not exiſted to no purpoſe; ſuch were his words.

It is many years ſince I loſt ſight of him. The work was in forwardneſs, but not near finiſhed: he had only completed the firſt part, which went no further than the peace of Nimeguen; a period at which, had Lewis died, he would, in the abbé's opinion, have left a name unſullied by errors and imprudences.

This gentleman is now dead; but no performance of a tendency ſimilar to that he was writing, has appeared either in France or elſewhere. From thence I conclude, that either he thought proper from prudential motives to diſcontinue,

or perhaps deſtroy it, or that ſuch as had the reviſal of his papers, took upon them to ſuppreſs it; a thing not unuſual in France, eſpecially when religion or government are in queſtion.

You will frequently have occaſion to obſerve, that moſt Frenchmen, as well as moſt foreigners, are more pleaſed with Marli, Choiſy, or Bellevue, than with Verſailles: the ſuperiority of the latter in riches and magnificence is inconteſtible; but all this reſults from art; whereas the beauties of the other places, though aſſiſted by art, have more of nature; they are ſituated near the Seine, and poſſeſs thoſe rural decorations of landſkips and proſpects, the abſence of which no artificial grandeur can ſupply.

Profuſion pleaſes in no ſhape: poſſibly the very ſuperbneſs of Verſailles renders it much more an object of admiration than pleaſure. The mind is fatigued with ſo much

much contemplation of the ſurpriſing and marvellous, and ſeeks for reſt by the ſame rule that it is needed by the body after a long walk, which, however fine the road may be, is always weariſome at laſt.

Mediocrity in the proportion of ornaments is always found to make the moſt agreeable impreſſion; for this reaſon the taſte in architecture and in gardening which admits of the feweſt, and approaches neareſt to ſimplicity, is by judges allowed to be the beſt, and is indeed upon experience the moſt reliſhed by the majority; which is a ſubſtantial proof of its merit.

Nature chiefly delights us when only cultivated to a certain degree: we are much more amuſed, while travelling, by caſting our eyes around on a country in a high ſtate of agriculture and fertility, than by examining walks and gardens trimmed and arranged with the niceſt care; the

plainer theſe are laid out, the leſs they are apt to tire one's attention.

Lewis himſelf, however he might exult in the pomp and grandeur that invironed him at Verſailles, often forſook it to enjoy himſelf with eaſe and freedom in ſome other place, as he frankly acknowledged. Fontainebleau and Marli were his favourite abodes; in the latter, eſpecially, he would chearfully diveſt himſelf of all ſtate: here, it is reported, he was wont jokingly to ſay, that he was Lewis of Bourbon, but that at Verſailles he was King of France.

LETTER XXXIX.

THE moſt eſſential advantage that Paris enjoys over London, is the number of gardens and walks deſigned for the uſe of the public.

Without

Without being at the pains of going out of town, valetudinarians, perſons of ſedentary occupations, or immerſed in too much buſineſs to quit Paris, may at any time of the day repair in a few minutes to a place elegantly accommodated for recreation and exerciſe.

Paris is ſurrounded on every ſide by a magnificent walk, conſiſting of four ranges of trees, making three beautiful alleys; the middlemoſt is very large, being intended for carriages, the others are alſo very ſpacious: here on Sundays, and on the afternoon of Thurſdays, in fair weather, multitudes of people and of carriages are ſeen. This, however, is only to be underſtood of that part of the circle which incloſes Paris on the northern ſide: that on the ſouth has been made and planted with trees, only within a few years; but when theſe are come to their full growth, this ſemicircle will unqueſtionably be the pleaſanteſt walk of the two; the proſpects

from it open far into a fine country, to which you are invited by a number of noble avenues of ſtately trees, that caſt an extenſive ſhade in the Summer ſeaſon.

The ſight in the north walk is obſtructed on one ſide by Montmartre and Montfaucon, both which have in many places a rocky and dreary appearance; but on turning yourſelf towards Paris, the eye is inſtantly relieved by the vaſt variety of fine houſes and gardens which border the whole length of that walk.

As this ſide of Paris is inhabited by the faſhionable claſſes, in a much larger proportion than the other, the walks belonging to it, will, from their proximity, long maintain their prerogative againſt thoſe on the other ſide.

This circular range of trees round Paris goes by the denomination of Boulevards, from being ſeated on the ſpot where bul-

warks formerly ſtood in the time of their civil wars.

In no place in or near Paris will you meet with ſuch diverſity of every kind: the crouds that paſs and repaſs on foot conſiſt of all that are not perſons of rank; theſe never or very ſeldom quit their coaches in this place; on the contrary, it is preciſely here they parade in ſtate: all people indeed who can keep or hire carriages, are fond of exhibiting themſelves in this manner upon the Boulevards.

A prying obſerver will find here a variety of objects to employ him; it is here you will be chiefly able to diſcriminate between the appearance at large of the inhabitants of Paris, and thoſe of London.

A ſenſible Engliſhman who was ſettled at Paris, but whoſe buſineſs occaſionally required his preſence at London, was wont to amuſe himſelf with counting the num-

ber of ſilk gowns that met his eye in this place on a Sunday afternoon, and thoſe that he ſaw in St. James's Park and Conſtitution-hill on the ſame day, within an equal ſpace of time. His computation was incomparably in favour of our people, the general ſuperiority of whoſe circumſtances ſtruck him, he confeſt, the oftener he viſited his own country.

The teſtimony of this perſon is the more to be relied upon, as he was an inveterate foe both to the religion and government of his country, and noted for his attachment to France, and malevolence to England.

A few afternoons examination of ſuch individuals and objects as will occur to you on this ſpot, will induce you to coincide with his ſentiments.

Whenever you are inclined to caſt a curſory glance on the greateſt farrago of

amuſements the world can afford, you will certainly find it here: jugglers, fire eaters, tumblers, rope and wire dancers, puppet ſhews and buffooneries; all thoſe exhibitions, in ſhort, that ſerve to entertain the vulgar, are in a manner concentered here.

There are alſo ſome attempts at elegant paſtimes, ſuch as rooms with vocal and inſtrumental muſic; but the performers tell you at firſt ſight by their appearance, that they are none of the primeſt, and their execution ſoon confirms your ſuſpicions.

It is ſaid the police of Paris is at the expence of providing theſe laſt, for the entertainment of the multitudes that croud the Boulevards on ſummer evenings: if this be true, it ſhews the general poverty of individuals in a very ſtriking light: none of theſe methods of keeping people in good humour are wanted among us; every man that frequents a place of pleaſurable reſort, is ſuppoſed to have where-

wherewith to pay for his ſhare of the enjoyment.

This very indulgence of the ſuperintending powers, proves how well they are appriſed of the deficiency of means prevailing among the inferior claſſes: in a country where the natives are ſo fond of pleaſure, it is altogether a ſtrong argument how little the commonalty is able to procure it.

It is principally in ſuch inſtances as theſe, that you will be ſatisfactorily convinced of the much greater proſperity attending the ſituation of the ſimilar ranks in England: Vauxhall has nightly a conſiderable proportion of them; ſo formerly had Marybone: the other amuſive haunts that ſwarm about our metropolis, are in a great meaſure ſupported by them.

Reflections of this nature will, if you are as attentive as you ought to be, accompany

company you, not only on the Boulevards, but in many other public places of the French metropolis.

Adjoining to the *Place Louis quinze*, is one of the nobleſt walks in Paris, called *Le Cours La Reine*. It lies on the borders of the river Seine, oppoſite to the invalides; which ever way you turn yourſelf it offers either agreeable or magnificent proſpects.

There is a tradition that La Fontaine, the famous fabuliſt, took ſuch peculiar delight in this ſpot, and another which is contiguous to it, the *Champs Eliſées*, that when engaged in any compoſition of length, he would ſometimes ſpend the whole day there in rumination and ſtudy.

Theſe Elyſian fields are environed by a variety of fine objects: houſes, gardens, and avenues, form a grand and pleaſing mixture, in the midſt of which are fields and

and meadows that give an air of novelty to the ſcene by their ruralneſs and verdure.

Here, if you are either inclined to ride or to walk, you may take your choice; the area is of vaſt extent, and is completely ſituated for either of theſe exerciſes: you are ſheltered from the northern and eaſtern blaſts by riſing grounds covered with houſes, and to the weſt and ſouth you command a ſpacious level, interſected with rows and groups of trees.

This in my opinion is one of the moſt pleaſing and healthful ſpots about Paris; if you ſhould dwell at any convenient diſtance, I would adviſe you to make it a frequent object of your early morning excurſions: the aſcent from it towards Montmartre, is a gentle ſlope all the way, and will procure you an excellent ſtomach for breakfaſt, if you riſe in proper time to take ſuch a previous circuit.

I re-

I remember an old officer, grown grey in the French ſervice, who lived in this neighbourhood, and took almoſt every day, weather permitting, the walk I have been recommending: he was a hale ſtrong man, middle ſized, and full of activity. He attributed the duration and vigour of his health to the bodily exerciſe to which he had been accuſtomed from his youth.

He was upon the whole an extraordinary perſonage. Smitten with the reputation of the famous Charles of Sweden, and with the deſire of ſeeing foreign countries, he left France in his younger days, and went to Conſtantinople, in company with a relation who belonged to the French ambaſſador. There, by means of this latter, he was introduced to ſome Swediſh officers, whom he accompanied to Bender, at the time their monarch was endeavouring to arm the Ottoman empire againſt Ruſſia: being then a handſome, ſprightly, and active youth, he was much noticed by Charles; to ingratiate

gratiate himſelf with whom, he applied with uncommon diligence to the ſtudy of the Swediſh language, in which he perfectly ſucceeded. He was ſerviceable to that prince, and to ſome of his principal officers, in ſeveral tranſactions of importance, after he had been ſeized and confined in conſequence of his raſh attempt to reſiſt an army with a handful of attendants. On the return of Charles to Sweden, he followed him, and had a commiſſion in his army at the time he was ſlain at the ſiege of Fredericſhall: he then quitted the Swediſh ſervice, and came back to France, where he obtained a preferment in the army.

He was a man of amazing memory, and indefatigable obſervation. He was a ſort of a Folard, ſtudying the art of war upon the ſame plan, and continually occupied in making comments on all he had ſeen in the various ſcenes of his military life. He had, among other performances, written a treatiſe on the reſpective merits

of

of all the European nations in martial affairs; the Engliſh were mentioned in it with particular diſtinction. The two greateſt objects of his admiration were Hannibal and Marlborough, whom he ſcrupled not to place at the head of the whole liſt of ancient and modern warriours: he knew not which of the two was the firſt; but in this he was poſitive, that none ever ſurpaſſed them in the judiciouſneſs of their plans, the ſteadineſs of their execution, the celerity with which they obviated or encountered difficulties, and that none equalled them in the aſtoniſhing capacity with which they held together and governed armies compoſed of various nations independent and often jealous of each other, whoſe different tempers they had to conſult, and intereſts to reconcile.

This gentleman's moderation was of an original caſt. Contrary to that ardour which prompts men to ſignalize themſelves for

for the ſake of riſing, he never coveted any promotion higher than that of captain; content to give his advice when aſked, and indifferent about every thing but the pleaſure of ſpeculating upon the events in war of which he had been witneſs.

The truth was, that he did this with a freedom and boldneſs, which, though they might gain him many admirers, procured him at the ſame time as many enemies: theſe probably had intereſt enough to prevent his riſe; but having a genteel income beſide his commiſſion, and being of a philoſophical turn, he reſolutely perſiſted in the exerciſe of his criticiſms, careleſs what the conſequences might prove.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

THE moſt pleaſant, though not the moſt frequented garden in Paris, is *Le Jardin du Roi.* It lies at a diſtance from the faſhionable world, in a remote and obſcure quarter, and remains therefore unnoticed and neglected by the majority, whoſe principal view in reſorting to ſuch places, is rather to ſee and be ſeen, than to enjoy the recreation ariſing from exerciſe and pleaſantneſs of ſituation.

It is open, airy, and ſpacious. In it is a riſing ground, on the ſummit of which an artificial mount has been raiſed, that commands an enchanting proſpect far into the beautiful country that lies on the ſouthern banks of the Seine.

This agreeable garden owes its being to Cardinal Richelieu. He founded it for the reception and cultivation of exotic and medicinal plants, of which large quantities are kept and reared with great care and induſtry: they form all together a very noble collection of natural curioſities, which is open twice a week for public inſpection.

A large hall belongs to this garden, wherein lectures on botany and pharmacy are delivered gratis to all comers of decent appearance: two profeſſorſhips have been inſtituted for this purpoſe.

I have been told that one of the moſt learned naturaliſts in Paris was once a poor lad employed in ſweeping the hall after the company was departed. His native propenſity to hear and to improve was ſuch, that a ſurgeon who attended the lectures took notice of it, and befriended

friended him ſo effectually, that from one ſtep to another, he roſe to great knowledge in the branches taught here, as well as in the profeſſion of his patron, whoſe daughter he married, and whoſe fortune he inherited.

From the borders of the Seine to the Baſtille, runs a long and elegant garden belonging to the arſenal or ſtorehouſe of war, reſembling our armoury in the tower.

The principal reaſon that induces me to mention this place, is to remind you of the able and upright ſtateſman who preſided over that department with ſo much ſplendour and ſucceſs, during the reign of Henry the Fourth, the famous Duke of Sully. It was here he laid the foundation of that excellent work which has already been recommended to your peruſal, and which cannot be too much prized.

Over the gate-way of this arſenal are the two Latin verſes that follow:

Ætna haec Henrico vulcania tela miniſtrat,
Tela giganteos debellatura furores.

They are highly eſteemed in France, and were written at the requeſt of Henry the Fourth himſelf, who deſired his name-ſake, Bourbon was the author's name, to comprize in two verſes the deſcription of what that building was intended for.

This Bourbon was one of the beſt Latin poets that France has produced. It is ſaid the above lines ſtruck the celebrated Santeuil with that emulation which rendered him ſo great in the poetic world. He held them in ſuch admiration, as to declare he would give half his works to have compoſed them.

A garden which the majority of connoiſſeurs prefer to all the others in Paris,

is

is that which belongs to the palace of Luxembourg. It is of great extent, of an elegant ſimplicity, well ſhaded and verdured, and ſtands in the wholeſomeſt air of Paris, which alone is a ſufficient motive for its being much frequented.

As it lies in the neighbourhood of the colleges and other buildings conſtituting the univerſity, it has by ſcholars been dignified with the title of *Honos Regionis Latinæ*, in alluſion to the name of *Païs Latin*, which the Pariſians have beſtowed on this quarter of the metropolis.

In conſequence of this ſituation, it is much reſorted to by ſtudents and collegians of all denominations: a French wit ſtiles it ſomewhere *La Revue des Habits noirs*, the review of black coats, of which indeed there is ſometimes a prodigious number, oftentimes a great plurality.

There was ſome years ſince a remarkable character appertaining, if one may ſo ſay, to this place; he wore the dreſs of an Abbé, but was ſuſpected to be a perſon of quite another claſs: thoſe who ſaw him in this garden, all agreed in acknowledging they had never ſeen him elſewhere. He was a comely man, well made, and had all the appearance of an individual of rank; his voice was uncommonly harmonious, and his articulation the moſt clear and diſtinct that ever I heard; he had an eaſy politeneſs about him, which prepoſſeſſed every one in his favour: ſuch was the reſpect, or rather predilection, ſhewn him, that one would have thought all preſent had received ſome particular marks of his friendſhip.

It was obſervable that he never made his appearance until the duſk of the evening, and never came accompanied. Sunday night was his uſual time of exhi-

biting; wherever he found the moſt numerous company ſeated, he would join them with that chearful and familiar civility which is uſual in France in ſuch places. Whatever the converſation might be, it would immediately, on his partaking of it, aſſume a gaiety and ſprightlineſs, of which one would have hardly thought it ſuſceptible: every body ſeemed inſpired by his preſence; ſtories, bon mots, and repartees, flew from all ſides; one might have compared him to the ſun in the centre of the world, ſhedding light and warmth on all the ſurrounding planets.

A particularity that eſcaped no one was, that he never mentioned the leaſt circumſtance, by which one might be led to gueſs at his rank or profeſſion; he never indeed introduced himſelf into any tale, much leſs made himſelf the hero of it: notwithſtanding the jocoſeneſs of his talk, and the infinite fund of entertainment his wit and vivacity afforded, there was a

ſomething of ſuperiority attending his manner and behaviour, that precluded all thoſe queſtions which ariſe from familiarity.

Many were the conjectures formed concerning him. Some thought him an actor, who diſguiſed himſelf in order to learn the notions and ideas of the various claſſes of ſociety, and to mix into company with leſs danger of diſcovery. Others imagined he was an author, who delighted in this manner of ſtudying mankind, and furniſhing himſelf with a multiplicity of characters for the portraits he drew in his writings. No few were of opinion he was a lawyer, who took this method of uſing himſelf to ſpeak before an audience, ſtrangers to him as much as he to them. As many adjudged him to be a man employed by people in authority, to feel the pulſe of the generality on the public tranſactions of the times. Some again pronounced him the hanger-on of ſome per-

ſonage of high rank, for whoſe amuſement he collected all the private anecdotes of a diverting nature which he could procure. Others concluded him to be a humouriſt, who indulged himſelf in this vein of merriment from natural impulſe, and with no other intent than to paſs his time agreeably.

Whatever his reality might be, his appearance and manners were ſo acceptable, that every one concurred in declaring they had never met with ſo entertaining a perſon. He grew at laſt ſo popular in this place, and the circles wherever he was found became ſo crowded, that probably diſliking ſuch multitudes, and being averſe to a manifeſtation of himſelf, he relinquiſhed this garden, and was never known to have re-appeared in any other.

A gentleman once ventured to beg the favour of his acquaintance; it was on the breaking up of the company at the cuſtomary

mary hour of ſhutting the gates; but the anſwer he received, though polite, was very laconic and deciſive, Sir, you do me much honour, but you muſt excuſe me.

The garden of the *Palais Royal* is, in proportion to its dimenſions, which are not extenſive, the moſt frequented of any in Paris. As it ſtands in the center of the faſhionable parts of this metropolis, it is the rendezvous of the beau monde. Here you will meet with ladies and gentlemen of the haut ton in greater number than any where.

Some people have qualified this place with the appellation of *rus in urbe*; but this is more than it deſerves: were it not for the company that is to be ſeen there, I fancy it would be very much neglected. Excluſive of a large alley, where the company ſits, walks, or aſſembles in groups, the reſt of the garden is quite ſolitary, and has nothing to recommend it: you are ſurrounded

ſurrounded by the back parts of indifferent houſes, that cloſe in, as it were, upon you, and leave no ſpace between the garden and their very walls.

While we are in a place that made part of the reſidence of Cardinal Richelieu, it may not be amiſs to apprize you of an anecdote, which, if true, diſplays a fund of ambition and thirſt of fame, of an equally inſatiable and ſingular nature.

It is reported that lying on his death bed, and having with great magnanimity taken leave of his friends and intimates, he directed, in order the better to recall him to their remembrance, whenever they entered a houſe where they had been ſo well treated, and received ſo many favours from him, that on the inſtant of his giving up the breath, the public clock of his palace ſhould be ſtopt for ever, and the needle left pointing to the minute when he expired.

Notwith-

Notwithſtanding the character of a *petit maitre* is by no means commendable, yet as many of them are young men of real merit in various reſpects, and as this garden and the adjoining coffee-houſes abound with them, you muſt occaſionally frequent theſe places, if you intend to acquire a knowledge of the younger ſort of French gentlemen. Here you will ſee them in their genuine colours, free, open, airy, chearful, and what will atone for many defects, extremely ſociable and well-bred. In ſuch company you cannot fail to ſpend your time agreeably. Perfection is not the portion of either young or old; but it will be your own fault intirely, if you ſhould not contract ſome valuable acquaintance in theſe places among thoſe of your own age. Hardly any of them are free from that levity and intemperance of behaviour and manners, which are too juſtly imputed to the juvenile part of the French nation: but you muſt take people as you find them; put up complaiſantly with

their failings, and they will make you ample amends by their ſprightlineſs, their gaiety, their readineſs to oblige, and by what you muſt allow one of the moſt uſeful qualifications in ſociety, their willingneſs to overlook your own deficiencies.

Youth, in the words of Gay, is the ſeaſon made for joy: it is no leſs the ſeaſon for contracting pleaſant and laſting friendſhips, and you are in a country which of all others produces that character in perfection, of which Horace ſays, *nil ego prætulerim jucundo ſanus amico.*

LETTER XLI.

YOU will find the Tuilleries inconteſtably the moſt magnificent garden in Paris; and, what will doubtleſs induce you to give it a preference to all the others,

others; it is moſt of any frequented by the young and gay of all denominations: that of the Palais Royal is chiefly uſed for a place of appointment; but it is in this they chiefly delight to walk.

An elderly French gentleman, of great good ſenſe and long obſervation, was wont to ſay, that the Tuilleries was *le jardin de la jeuneſſe*, the garden of youth, and the Luxembourg *la jardin de l'age mur*, the garden of mature age.

There was certainly much of truth in his obſervation. The ſplendour and brilliancy of every object that offers itſelf to view in the firſt of theſe, accords perfectly with the warmth and vivacity inherent to youthful minds. In the ſame manner, the unadorned beauty of the ſecond, reſulting from ſimple nature, is more acceptable to people arrived at a more thinking period of life.

Add

Add to this, that from the Tuilleries the ſight is entertained with perpetual ſcenes of activity: the noble key juſt under the terraſs, is all hurry and motion; it is one of the chief outlets of Paris, and is the high road to Verſailles, which is ſaying enough. The river is continually covered with boats, going to, or coming from the principal villages and reſidences in the neighbourhood of Paris; it is the chief channel of trade between that city and the rich, fruitful, and populous province of Normandy. All this affords a conſtant fund of that variety of which youth is particularly fond.

Nothing of this appears in the Luxembourg. Tranquility reigns every where: the palace is accompanied by two or three fine houſes fronting the garden; but even this palace pleaſes more by its elegance than grandeur. The garden itſelf is quite in a rural taſte; the only proſpect from it is into ſome other gardens, eſpecially

cially that of the Carthuſians, neat, plain, and ſolitary.

All theſe concomitances render this place an excellent ſpot for meditation, or ſober and ſerious diſcourſe; it is accordingly the favourite reſort of ſedate and thoughtful people, ſuch as the generality of mankind become at the middle ages of life.

In all theſe gardens there is a convenience in uſe no where elſe in Europe; beſide the benches on which one may ſit gratis, chairs may be hired by the year, month, week, day, or ſingle ſitting.

Another convenience peculiar to the Tuilleries is that you may breakfaſt, dine, ſup, in ſhort have any refreſhments you pleaſe, at the divers entrances into it on every ſide.

One

One of the chief advantages of this garden, is that it communicates with the moſt beautiful parts of Paris, and of its environs; go out which way you will, you meet with noble edifices, or fine proſpects.

The entrance into theſe gardens is free to perſons decently clad; but rigorouſly interdicted to domeſtics in livery, or women of ſervile appearance. Whoever they may be that are admitted, they muſt not ſeem of the low claſſes.

Before we quit the chapter of gardens, let us not forget that belonging to the Prince of Soubize. Two reaſons will render it worthy of your notice; the firſt is the politeneſs of the owner in dedicating it to the uſe of the public; the ſecond, his generoſity in granting a free acceſs to his elegant and numerous library, to all perſons of character. I have heard that he has the moſt conſiderable collection of

Italian books of any perſon in France, amounting to near twenty thouſand.

It is happy for the inhabitants of Paris, that they have ſuch a multiplicity of gardens to range in at pleaſure. They do not ſeem ſo gifted with that diſpoſition to active recreation as the people of London; and were it not for theſe accommodations, would poſſibly want the little exerciſe, which theſe places invite them in a manner to take.

On the other hand, I have heard it aſſerted that theſe gardens hinder them from exerting more activity in their paſtimes, and are an incitement to indolence: that were no ſuch places in exiſtence, they would be obliged to beſtir themſelves in queſt of freſh air, and would of courſe extend their walks to a much greater diſtance.

Whatever

Whatever the truth may be, theſe numerous and ſpacious openings contribute to purify the atmoſphere of Paris in a very neceſſary degree, when we conſider that it is ſituated in a bottom, and hemmed in on the north by two large hills or mountains, that greatly intercept the winds that blow from between the north-eaſt to the north-weſtern points. The exceſſive narrowneſs of the ſtreets, and cloſeneſs of the houſes, call no leſs for ſuch a help, as well as the height of them, and the crouds they contain.

Theſe gardens are alſo very friendly to the conſtitution of ſuch as can ſpare an hour in the morning to the embibing of freſh air, and bracing their limbs with exerciſe: were theſe advantages to be only had at a diſtance, they would either interfere with the time allotted for buſineſs, or, what is more probable, would be totally neglected.

In London, where numbers of people are well able to give ſuch a portion of their time to relaxation, the length of the walk they muſt take, ere they arrive at the deſired ſpot, would abſorb the whole hour intended for this purpoſe. The conſequence is, that they remain at home, or adjourn perhaps to a coffee-houſe, where moſt certainly their conſtitution cannot receive any benefit.

Wherever you chuſe to reſide in Paris, as you will always be in the vicinity of ſuch a place, you cannot render your body a better ſervice, than by viſiting it before or after breakfaſt. An hour ſpent in this manner, will give you ſpirits for the whole day, if it ſhould be requiſite to remain within doors during the remaining part. I ſpeak from experience.

During the Summer and mild ſeaſons of the year, let me adviſe you to follow a method

method of improving both your health and underſtanding, which I ſaw practiſed by a French young nobleman of great rank. He dwelt near the Luxembourg, and whenever the weather was fine, would employ a conſiderable part of the morning in what may very juſtly be ſtiled a peripatetic ſtudy of languages. His birth and fortune intitling him to high expectations, and his friends intending to accompliſh him ſo completely as to fit him for any poſt, he was taught the principal languages of Europe. The manner he learned them was chiefly by converſation: a ſubject was choſen, upon which as much was ſaid as both the teacher and the learner could ſuggeſt: the ideas were firſt expreſt in French words by both parties, and then tranſlated into the words of the language to be learned.

The progreſs he had made was very conſiderable. He had not purſued this plan above two years, and was able to

converſe fluently in Spaniſh and Italian, and tolerably in German and Engliſh. This, conſidering his other ſtudies and occupations, was doing a great deal.

I have mentioned this particular as a precedent for your imitation, and am convinced you cannot adopt a better for the ſpeedy acquiſition of French, or any modern language.

LETTER XLII.

TO a young gentleman at your time of life, Paris will in ſome reſpects prove a more agreeable abode than London.

You will in particular meet with a much more frequent recurrence of ſights and ſhews to amuſe you. Here, if we except our lord mayor's day, and the king's going to parliament, there are none of thoſe ceremonial

ceremonial exhibitions that occaſion a great concourſe of people.

One of the moſt curious ſights at Paris, is the vaſt variety of proceſſions on that holy day which goes by the name of *Fete Dieu*, the feſtival of God. This extraordinary name was given to it, by way of ſignifying that on that day, the Deity enjoyed a ſort of perſonal and viſible triumph upon earth, in the honours paid to the body of Chriſt. This you know the Roman Catholics believe to be contained in the hoſt, that is carried about on this occaſion with the moſt pompous ſolemnity.

This is incomparably the moſt magnificent feſtival in the Roman church. It was inſtituted in one of the Gothic ages, I believe the eleventh, in oppoſition to the opinion of thoſe who denied the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation.

The moſt brilliant and coſtly of theſe proceſſions in Paris, is that of St. Sulpice. I will not anticipate your curioſity by a deſcription of it here; ſuffice it to ſay, that what with muſic, rich veſtments, number of attendants, and diverſity of ornamental concomitances, it is one of the grandeſt and moſt ſumptuous parades of religion throughout Chriſtendom.

It will be worth your while to riſe early on the morning of this day, to view the number of beautiful pieces of tapeſtry, that are hung up in thoſe ſtreets through which the proceſſions are to paſs. Forget not eſpecially to ſee thoſe of the Gobelins, and of the Louvre, both belonging to the crown. The ſplendor with which the churches are decorated during this feſtival, which laſts a whole week, will, I doubt not, prove an incentive to viſit them, particularly when you conſider it is the beſt opportunity of gaining a proper inſight

inſight into the genius and ſpirit of the Romiſh religion.

There are two ſolemn occaſions, on which you will have a view of the parliament, and of the corporation of the city of Paris in all their grandeur, and reſpective formalities. Theſe are the commemoration of that city's returning to the allegiance of the crown in the perſon of Henry the Fourth, and the renewal of the vow made by Lewis the Thirteenth, when he placed his family and kingdom under the protection of the Virgin Mary. Both theſe ceremonies are very ſplendid, and merit your attention. The firſt takes place in March, the ſecond in Auguſt.

One of the moſt curious entertainments in Paris is the *Foire St. Germain*. This fair laſts from the beginning of February till within a few days of Eaſter. It is an epitome of all the buſineſs, as well as of all the diverſions in Paris. Notwith-

Notwithſtanding the crowds that frequent it all day and part of the night, it is attended with an orderlineſs and regularity, the more admirable, as it is the continual and well-known rendezvous of all the ſharpers and ladies of pleaſure in Paris.

What adds to the vivacity of this paſtime, it falls within the duration of the carnaval, an amuſement for which the French ſeem peculiarly calculated. Omit not, upon the three days preceding Aſh-Wedneſday, to ſee the humours of the multitudes that go about the ſtreets in maſquerade; wit, laughter, and merriment ſeem to have taken poſſeſſion of every body; unleſs a man is overwhelmed with misfortunes, or afflicted with illneſs, it is an enjoyment which poor and rich, high and low muſt equally reliſh, from the odd figures, and riſible fancies diſplayed on every ſide.

The whims and jocularities of theſe three days, are ſucceeded by a ſudden converſion to the extremes of ſobriety and ſerioufneſs, which is no leſs worthy of your notice: on the morning of Aſh-Wedneſday, the churches ſwarm with penitents of all ranks and ſorts, who kneel down with great ſeeming contrition before the altars, and whoſe foreheads a prieſt croſſes with a pinch of conſecrated aſhes.

This ceremony, which is cuſtomary in all Roman Catholic countries, has, together with the extravagances and vagaries that precede it, and to which it puts a period for a while, been very happily deſcribed, by applying to them the two following lines out of Virgil's Poem on the Bees:

Ili motus animorum atque hæc certamina tanta
Pulveris exigui jactu compreſſa quieſcent.

One

One of the moſt elegant ſights in Paris is that which is ſeen at the end of Lent, in Paſſion-Week, in caſe the weather happens to be fair.

On the banks of the Seine, after traverſing the Bois de Boulogne, ſtands the nunnery of Longchamp. It is celebrated for the muſical pieces performed there during this ſeaſon. All the faſhionable people at Paris repair thither to hear them; ſome in coaches, others on horſe-back; both carriages and horſes are on this occaſion ſet off with all the taſte and magnificence poſſible, and form one of the moſt ſuperb cavalcades that can be conceived: the diſtance from Paris to this place is about three miles, and if the day be fine and ſunny, the whole length of the way is crowded. The coup d'oeil of this brilliant aſſemblage is highly worth your curioſity.

Another

Another opportunity of employing it, is that which recurs annually ſome time in May. The king, accompanied by his whole court, in all its ſtate and grandeur, reviews the military of his houſehold, which compoſe a numerous and ſplendid body of men.

One of the greateſt curioſities in France are the fine water-works at St. Cloud, a delightful village lying on the Seine at a ſmall diſtance from Paris: the walk to it is extremely pleaſant, and accompanied by a variety of beautiful and amuſing objects. Theſe waters play on the firſt Sunday of every month regularly.

The Duke of Orleans has a palace here, the ſituation of which is enchanting. The gardens are laid out on a gentle aſcent, and adorned with terraces riſing ſucceſſively over each other, in which are contained thoſe water-works: the proſpect from thence extends to Paris and all the adja-

cent country. You cannot, in a mild and clear day, treat yourſelf with a more delicious party of pleaſure on foot, or in an open boat, with a philoſophic friend or two. The banks of the Seine are quite rural, fields, meadows, country houſes, and gardens.

A gentleman of a ſolid and yet a very gay diſpoſition, always recommended this method to thoſe with whom he went a pleaſuring. A vehicle, he ſaid, obſtructed the two moſt agreeable ends in view, which were converſation and proſpects: the noiſe and motion of a carriage deranged both thoughts and words, and only permitted a deſultory intercourſe; for this reaſon, in ſhort excurſions, he always preferred walking, or going down a ſtream.

During the latter days of the year, on the laſt eſpecially, be ſure to repair to the *Palais Marchand*; you will there find a world of thoſe things which the philoſopher

pher of old congratulated himſelf for not wanting. But that philoſopher did not live at Paris, nor probably much in the female circle: if he had, it is highly probable, that however he might have affected to ſlight theſe things on his own account, he would quickly have found them uſeful in obtaining and preſerving the good graces of his fair acquaintance.

Let no man who wiſhes to be favoured with the ſmiles of the Pariſian ladies, ſuffer this day to paſs without bringing them, from this agreeable magazine of fancies, ſome token of his remembrance.

This *Palais Marchand* is truly a *mundus muliebris*, a repertory of all thoſe ornaments and decorations, that conſtitute ſo capital a part of the wants and deſires of womankind.

Theſe are, on the afore-mentioned day, diſplayed with an art and ingenuity that catch

catch the eyes of all ſpectators. New years gifts of all denominations, and of all prices, offer themſelves to your ſight: fail not therefore to imitate the numberleſs examples that will be ſet before you, in preſenting to thoſe among the ſex, with whom you are on a friendly footing, ſome genteel proof of your attention to their civilities.

LETTER XLIII.

I HAVE heard obſervant travellers remark, that the greateſt curioſity at Amſterdam and at London, is the prodigious number of people who frequent their reſpective changes. This at the ſame time they unanimouſly allow to be a convincing argument of the multiplicity of buſineſs carried on in both places, as well as of the induſtry of the inhabitants.

By

By the ſame rule, the thinneſs or deſertion of a Change, prove the narrowneſs of circumſtances in ſuch a place; witneſs the once rich and commercial city of Antwerp, where graſs grows on the Change, and where nothing remains but the ſkeleton of its ancient grandeur.

The Change of Paris, ſituated in the Rue Vivienne, exhibits no great ſymptoms of proſperity. It is but indifferently frequented, when we reflect on the extent and populouſneſs of Paris; the middle part is hardly ever trod, and the piazzas never crouded.

In the management of their lotteries you will no leſs diſcover an inferiority of means in thoſe upon whoſe exertions and contributions they depend; the price of the tickets and the worth of the prizes not approaching to ours.

There are no leſs than three lotteries in Paris; the royal one, that in favour of the

foundlings, and another of a charitable kind. The firſt is drawn twice, the others once a month.

It is not certainly in money matters the French can pretend to make a figure equal to that of the Engliſh; we are comparatively a much wealthier people. It will prove one of the moſt profitable and inſtructive employments of your ſtudious hours, to enquire into the various cauſes why the kingdom of France, which is equal at leaſt in natural fertility and goodneſs of ſoil to England, is not, in proportion to its dimenſions, either ſo populous, or ſo rich and plentiful in its productions.

Among the places of curious reſort in Paris, one may claſs the conveniencies for bathing near the *Palais Bourbon*. Every thing that is neceſſary and commodious for this purpoſe, has been contrived with the utmoſt care and propriety: there are two ſeparate buildings, one for men the other

other for women; this latter is guarded by regular centries, and attended only by women. All is conducted with remarkable neatneſs and diſpatch. Theſe baths are acceſſible at all hours both of day and night; every one has a bath to himſelf, which is heated or cooled at his option. Books and newſpapers are taken in for the uſe of ſuch as chuſe to read and reſt themſelves after bathing; there is nothing in ſhort wanting to render this a place of no leſs agreeableneſs than utility.

The amuſements at Paris have by ſome fretful peeviſh people been repreſented of inſufficient variety to pleaſe the different taſte of thoſe numerous travellers that croud hither from all parts of Europe.

It is difficult to tell upon what ground this complaint is founded. The theatres are open all the year, and there is no day in the whole twelvemonth, which does not afford ſome paſtime or ſhew, either

temporal or ſpiritual, if one may uſe ſuch an expreſſion.

I have already taken notice of their ſtanding theatres, which are three in number, the opera, and the French and Italian play-houſes. Others are opened at particular ſeaſons, ſuch as thoſe of the Foire St. Germain in February, and of the Foire St. Laurent in Auguſt.

In the article of pleaſure and recreations, you will obſerve a material difference between the police of Paris and that of London. Here the obſervance of the Sabbath, as it is called, is enforced with a ſtrictneſs unknown any where, excepting Scotland and New England, where indeed it is much more rigorous than in England itſelf. But in Paris the ruling powers have been more indulgent to human nature: aware that numbers of people have, and can have no other day of relaxation from their buſineſs or labour,

they have endeavoured to make it paſs agreeably to all conditions of men.

It is preciſely on the Sunday that diverſions of all kind abound; not only plays, but balls and maſquerades are tolerated.

The only exception is in Paſſion and Eaſter week, and upon very ſolemn days: but even then, there is a public paſtime allowed. It is indeed of a ſpiritual nature, and ſomething in the manner of our ſacred oratorios. It is called *le Concert Spirituel*, and is a very genteel and elegant amuſement, where you will always find the beſt of company.

A famous lieutenant of the police, in ſupport of the neceſſity of allowing great latitude in ſports and diverſions of a public nature, declared that in the *Quinzaine de Paques*, as Paſſion and Eaſter week are called in France, more diſturbances happened, and more miſchief was done, than

in any other fortnight throughout the year. This he attributed to the ſhutting up of the theatres, and other houſes of like entertainment.

In order to help out the *Concert Spirituel*, another place of public amuſement has been permitted on high feſtivals. You will be rather ſurpriſed, when I have told you that this place is a bear-garden, where dogs, bulls, lions, tygers, bears, and other beaſts are baited and worried to death.

This ſavage paſtime is as much frequented as any at Paris, and is exhibited in winter as well as in the mild ſeaſons; which is the more remarkable, as this ſcene of blood and carnage paſſes in an open area, ſurrounded by ſeats which, though covered over head, leave one otherwiſe expoſed to all the inclemencies of weather.

Thinking people have often expreſt their aſtoniſhment, that ſo ferocious a paſtime ſhould have been ſubſtituted in lieu of certainly the more gentle and humane entertainments of the ſtage. Manners muſt clearly receive more detriment by indulging in ſuch barbarous ſights, than by all the fun and laughter, which the jocoſeſt comedy, farce, or pantomime, can poſſibly occaſion.

You will, I doubt not, rejoice that ſo vulgar and baſe a diverſion is now in England abandoned to the meaneſt of the populace, and is not as in France licenſed by public authority.

Should you hear the epithets of rude and rough beſtowed on the character of your countrymen by the French, which many of them too readily do, I think you cannot anſwer them better than by informing them, it is not in their power to reproach us with the above barbarities,

which have long ago been exploded from the liſt of our paſtimes.

The French of late have, in imitation of our Vauxhall and Ranelagh, ſet up two places of amuſement ſomewhat on the ſame plan. The firſt goes actually by the name of Vauxhall, the other is called the Coliſée. They are both, the latter eſpecially, contrived with much taſte and elegance.

The firſt is ſituated upon the Boulevards. It conſiſts of a variety of rooms, all laid out and decorated in a different and very pleaſing manner; ſome of theſe are deſigned for dancing, others for walking or ſitting. The proſpect on one ſide of this place opens into the country aſcending towards Montmartre, on the other you have the view of the company upon the Boulevards: there are alſo little ſhops or ſtalls, very artfully diſpoſed, full of toys, trinkets, and jewels for ſale: the illu-

illuminations at night are very numerous and beautiful.

The *Coliſée* is far ſuperior in magnificence, and is much more frequented by the better ſort. It ſtands near the *champs Eliſées*, which makes it of eaſy and convenient reſort to the company that have been walking in the Tuilleries. The appearance and decorations of the Rotunda are very fine, and the walks very grand and ſpacious: it contains a large piece of water, on which juſts in boats, and fireworks, are occaſionally exhibited.

But notwithſtanding the pains that have been taken to render this place complete, it was reported, when I was laſt at Paris, that it did not anſwer the expence, and that the undertakers were apprehenſive they ſhould be obliged to drop the deſign. If true, this corroborates what has been ſaid concerning the pecuniary deficiencies in France, and ſhews there is a better diffuſion

fuſion of opulence among us than the French. Renelagh is far from being confined to the ſuperior ranks: it is as much indebted for its ſupport to the middling and decent claſſes.

LETTER XLIV.

AFTER laying my thoughts before you, on that variety of objects which preſent themſelves to the eyes and obſervation of a traveller, it is time to recall your attention to that principal object of all, the motive and end of your going to Paris.

Your intentions were to inſtruct yourſelf in the ways, notions, and knowledge of the French, to compare their progreſs in laudable attainments with thoſe made by the Engliſh, to imitate them in thoſe things wherein they deſerve to be propoſed

poſed as examples, to avoid the failings and errors you may diſcover among them, and finally to render all you ſee ſubſervient to the public good of your country, as well as conducive to your private intereſt.

In order to compaſs theſe purpoſes the more effectually, I have been particularly attentive to awaken in your mind, upon all occaſions, ſuch reflections as might lead you to extract a ſolid and permanent utility from what is too often conſidered in no other light than that of a curious paſtime.

It is the unhappineſs of moſt travellers to exerciſe their eyes a great deal, and their underſtanding very little; but without the exertion of both, they would have done better to have ſtaid at home.

We are ſent abroad not only to ſee, but to reflect: the firſt of theſe is the threſhold to the ſecond. It is an agreeable invitation

tion which the external ſenſes give to the mind, purpoſedly to induce it to ſummon its faculties to work, and to employ them in a uſeful inveſtigation of objects.

Theſe are in many reſpects but ſurfaces: if we mean to derive from them the whole benefit they are able to produce, we muſt be at the pains of diving deeper than our ocular reſearches can go.

A meer connoiſſeur and virtuoſo is a character by no means to be coveted by a gentleman. They who aim at no more, miſunderſtand the only juſtifiable purpoſe for which men of rank, education, and fortune, ought to travel; which is to adorn their minds with proper ideas of men and things, and not to learn the trade of a collector of curioſities.

It is of ſuch individuals the poet rightly ſays, *cœlum non animum mutant qui tranſmare currunt*, their voyages are attended with

with no other change than that of air, and they return from beyond ſea, as unimproved in eſſentials as at their ſetting out.

The œconomy of time is the capital maxim you muſt never loſe the ſight of. It is the polar ſtar of a traveller, and will enable him to make a long and proſperous voyage in a ſhort ſpace.

For this reaſon, though you cannot be too diligent in your enquiries and examinations, let them not be needleſsly extenſive. There are numbers of individuals, as well as of other objects, with whom gentlemen who are on their travels ought to be acquainted; but intimacy is too precious a gift to beſtow where the returns of utility are but ſmall.

Stint yourſelf therefore to few intimates: you will find no difficulty in ſelecting them; perſons of liberal knowledge and ſentiments, and of ſociable diſpoſitions are ſoon diſcernible.

In

In the company of ſuch you will acquire, without much labour, all that information, which without them no labour will ever procure.

Divide your reſearches equally between theſe and your books: experience will quickly teach you that neither of them can be neglected with impunity.

Remember the proverb you was taught at ſchool, *Aurora muſis amica.* In a traveller the remembrance ought to be more practical than in any other man: he has much to ſee, much to hear, and much to do: he has but a limited time for all this; which, if loſt, is irreparable, as opportunities of this ſort occur but once in our lives.

Our travelling days are like the ſeed-time of the year: if we ſow abundantly, we ſhall reap in proportion; but if our tillage is ſcanty, ſo we muſt expect will prove our harveſt.

Now

Now is the time to lay in an ample ſtock of all that is fit to be treaſured up in your memory. It is the grand ſeaſon of obſervation, eſpecially from the continual diverſity of objects and events that afford ſuch ground-work for a reflecting mind.

To obtain ſo deſirable an end, you muſt obey the injunction of the apoſtle, *omnia probate, quod bonum eſt tenete*; go into all companies, converſe with people of all characters, hearken to all opinions, and form your judgment with carefulneſs and deliberation.

A multiplicity of acquaintance is not ſo great an evil in your preſent caſe, as a narrow circle would prove. We can always find means to ſhake off the ſupernumerary; but without a competent number, we ſhall want that variety of tempers, taſtes, and diſpoſitions, which are neceſ-

ſary

ſary to obtain an adequate knowledge of human nature in the countries we viſit.

After devoting one half of your time to the improvement of your mind by ſtudy and reading, you have not only a right, but you are bound, by the laws of reaſon and propriety, to devote the reſt to converſation, company, and pleaſure.

Among the modes of converſing I will venture to claſs epiſtolary correſpondence. This I earneſtly recommend as the ſureſt method of not only acquiring the uſe of the French language, but of gaining a complete inſight into the genius, turn, and ſpirit of the people themſelves.

To this intent, let me adviſe you to follow a precedent which I quote with the more willingneſs, as I was witneſs of the ſucceſs attending it.

A young

A young gentleman of good family at Dreſden, was ſent by his parents to Paris, in the company of a relation who was extremely fond of him, and who being rich and without children, had adopted him his heir. This young gentleman had not only an excellent capacity, but was equally remarkable for his diligence and application. His relation, who was a man of ſound judgment, directed him with great care and diſcernment in all his occupations and ſtudies.

Being at the ſame time a perſon of diſtinction as well as fortune, he introduced him among people of the higheſt rank, whoſe favour his young friend had the happineſs to ſecure by his conciliating behaviour, and to whoſe houſe and company he was admitted with great kindneſs and civility.

As he was a keen and circumſpectful youth, ever intent upon making the beſt

uſe of every opportunity, he found means to ingratiate himſelf with a lady, and a gentleman, both of them perſons of diſtinguiſhed wit, whom he had the dexterity to induce to favour him with an intercourſe of letters, and who, luckily for him, had leiſure and inclination to anſwer his wiſhes.

This was the beſt ſchool he could have choſen for his improvement. As he poſſeſſed an unuſual fund of vivacity, and had been excellently educated, he was no leſs agreeable to them in the light of a correſpondent, than they to him: add to this, that nature had given him a comely perſon, and that fortune had befriended him with very brilliant expectations; both of them, the latter eſpecially, powerful inducements in the preſerving, as well as the procuring, of ſo advantageous a connection.

In imitation of this auſpicious precedent, lay yourſelf out to obtain the good will of ſome perſons of conſideration of

both ſexes: a little docility and engagingneſs of manners will ſoon procure it; you have all the requiſites to ſucceed; youth, ſprightlineſs, a prepoſſeſſing form, and a competency of means to produce yourſelf in the beſt companies.

With all theſe advantages, you alone will be to blame, if you do not connect yourſelf in the ſame manner as the young gentleman did, whoſe example I have propoſed for your imitation.

Allow me to warn you to be particularly cautious in the objects of your ſelection: chuſe if poſſible neither youth nor age; the middle ſtages of life are the fitteſt for your purpoſe: it is among them we find wit without flaſhineſs, and reaſon without auſterity; ſpeculation is then ripened into practice, and activity gives life to precept. Mere experience of tranſactions paſt long ago, and of which you can only hear the narration, is not to be ſet in

competition with the vivid proſpect of things actually paſſing under your eye, and of which, though you ſhould not be perſonally concerned in them, thoſe who are, may have the power of rendering you no indifferent ſpectator.

Vivacity on the other hand, while inexperienced, is always preſuming; it ſoars on the dangerous wings of hope and expectation; and confides too much in the future, to judge rightly of the preſent. Avoid therefore if you can both the extremities of life; when young we are too precipitate, when old too frigid.

After you have choſen an epiſtolary acquaintance to your mind, let the ſubjects of your letters never interfere with the affairs of your correſpondents: if, relying on your diſcretion, they ſhould unboſom themſelves on perſonal or family matters, remain wholly paſſive; add no thoughts of your own to thoſe they may think proper

per to communicate, and act the part of a ſimple auditor. If practicable, hear all and anſwer nothing.

By neglecting this rule, and making yourſelf a party, you will poſſibly be involved in difficulties, from which more inconveniencies may ariſe than you are aware of. Remember the old ſaying, *vox audita perit littera ſcripta manet.* It is better to hazard the ſpeaking of a dozen things, than the writing of one.

While you keep this maxim conſtantly in view, you may indulge your fancy in whatever flights you pleaſe: you cannot appear too chearful and jocoſe; it is the taſte of the nation at large; they carry it into every ſubject; the more you chime in with this humour, the more you will become acceptable.

Of the two correſpondents I have recommended, let the fair one be the prin-

cipal; endeavour by all proper aſſiduity to engage her to be copious and frequent in her epiſtles: the benefit you will derive from it is more than I can here deſcribe. Women of education are in all countries the moſt pleaſing correſpondents; there is a vein of eaſe and politeneſs in their manner of writing, which baffles all the ſtudy and preparation that uſually direct the pens of men of learning: theſe are too much under the controul of art; but thoſe are more under the guidance of nature; they write with leſs labour, and with a quicker effuſion of thought; the facility of their ſtile is genuine and unaffected, and is accompanied by thoſe graces, which, whether on paper, or in their behaviour, women alone are miſtreſſes of, and which carry more ſtrength and conviction than all arguments.

Such a correſpondence will neceſſarily refine your ideas and poliſh your ſtile: you will imperceptibly ſlide, as it were, into

into their manner, and catch that ſoft inſinuating air which gives them ſuch an aſcendancy, and makes the expreſſions that flow from their pens, almoſt as irreſiſtible as thoſe that fall from their lips.

If the French ladies are worthy of being courted in the light of correſpondents, they deſerve no leſs to be ſought as companions. The livelineſs of their tempers inſpires them with a variety of ways to make the time paſs pleaſurably, without having recourſe to that foe to wit and merriment, card-playing.

You will always find them diſpoſed to hold the chearfulleſt converſe, and to enter into every project tending to good humour and pleaſantry: they have to that intent invented a variety of ingenious amuſements, wherein thought is exerciſed without fatigue, and the mind improved, while agreeably employed.

A detail of theſe amuſements is not neceſſary here. An indication is ſufficient to awaken your curioſity and deſire to partake of them. Experience will ſoon convince you of their utility in furthering your progreſs in the French language, in giving your manners a turn to eaſy and familiar gaiety, and in thereby enabling you to render yourſelf agreeable in all companies and to all characters.

But be mindful at the ſame time, that it is not enough for a judicious traveller, to ſhine in the brilliant accompliſhments of faſhionable ſociety. Another taſk remains to be performed, the neglecting of which will defeat the main purpoſe of ſeeing foreign parts.

This eſſential and ultimate intent of your preſent voyage, has been ſufficiently explained and enforced in the courſe of theſe letters, and recapitulated at the beginning of this laſt and concluding one.

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The parting advice, I ſhall now give you, is to keep it frequently in view; let no occaſions of improvement paſs without recollecting it in a proper and efficacious manner.

There is a nation of which the travelling individuals have ſometimes laid themſelves open to the criticiſm and cavils of wits, for too ſcrupulous an attention to minute objects and occurrences. This nation is the German: but allowing the gentlemen of this country to be unneceſſarily curious and inquiſitive, it is certainly a fault on the right ſide; and conſidering that it is eaſier to retrench than to add, they are not perhaps to blame for ſwelling their obſervations to a larger bulk than is done by the travellers of other countries.

It may be that this very reflection engages them to neglect the remembrance of nothing that is thought worthy of being

ing ſhewn to them: as the future utility of their preſent remarks can only be determined by experience, they think it wiſdom to preſerve all the information they can acquire. Should ſome, or even much of it, prove uſeleſs to themſelves, it may be of benefit to others: in this light the notes they have taken, however numerous and ſeemingly unintereſting, may in caſes unforeſeen become highly ſerviceable. But ſuppoſing ſuch an emergency never to happen, ſtill it is a ſatisfaction of no ſmall degree to all men, at a certain period of life, to review the paſſages and tranſactions of their younger days. This is a paſtime in which the graveſt have a right to indulge, and wherein the wiſeſt have always taken particular delight; it is in ſome ſhape a renovation of youth; it refreſhes and enlivens the mind by the pleaſing recollections which it excites; imagination is amuſed by the pictures which memory draws, and judg-

ment

ment itſelf is not above beſtowing on them a ſmile.

What is it that chiefly renders perſons in years not unacceptable to the young, but this power of entertaining them with a recital of the adventures of their former lives, and of the various things they have ſeen? The more they can remember, the greater diverſity they can give to their narrations, and the ampler paſtime to their auditors. Whether we view this in the light of inſtruction or of entertainment, it is a good reaſon why we ſhould lay up in our youth a ſufficient fund from whence to derive pleaſure and profit both to ourſelves and others.

An apology for ſuch travellers as I have been deſcribing, is a recommendation of their example to your imitation. Let not therefore the groundleſs ſtrictures of the thoughtleſs and the negligent, diſcourage you from purſuing a plan of ſtrict obſervation

tion and enquiry. Let your paper and pencil claim a conſtant place in your pocket; and be not aſhamed to produce them whenever it is requiſite. How many gentlemen that have made the tour of Europe, are at this hour repenting the neglect of theſe uſeful companions.

Remember that you are now engaged in a buſineſs, which, if ill performed, can never be mended. It is better you ſhould over than under do it: you can hardly be too attentive, too diligent, too curious, in matters of real importance. The more you act up to theſe epithets, the leſs reaſon you will have hereafter to be diſſatiſfied with yourſelf. It is by theſe qualities the nation I have been ſpeaking of, is particularly fitted for travelling.

The moſt knowing and intelligent travellers that I have met with, were uſually Germans. What they wanted in bril-

liancy, they amply made up in ſolid utility. I have been often ſurpriſed at the extenſiveneſs of their reſearches, and at the patience and care which they muſt have exerciſed in order to obtain the knowledge they poſſeſt.

They did not, however, ſeem on this account to have denied themſelves the gratifications ariſing from paſtimes of a gayer complexion; they were men of the world, had frequented the beſt company, and contracted acquaintances that ſhewed they were perſons of merit and addreſs.

But it is not the love of gaiety that obſtructs improvement; a man may ſhine at balls and aſſemblies without diſqualifying himſelf for the moſt ſerious and moſt arduous occupations.

It is indolence that ſtands chiefly in the way of knowledge and acquirements of every ſort: this is the moſt dangerous foe

you

you will have to encounter; conquer him; and you will eaſily maſter every other difficulty.

By indolence, I do not mean that inactivity of body, which prevents the due exertion of its faculties; but that careleſſneſs and inattention of the mind, which holds its powers in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe, and deprives them of the vigour requiſite for the proſecution of neceſſary duties.

It often happens that a man's perſon is continually on the wing, and his thoughts as perpetually rambling, and never fixed upon a preciſe object for any conſtancy, or with any determinate view. This is the worſt ſpecies of indolence, as it conceals itſelf under the appearance of activity.

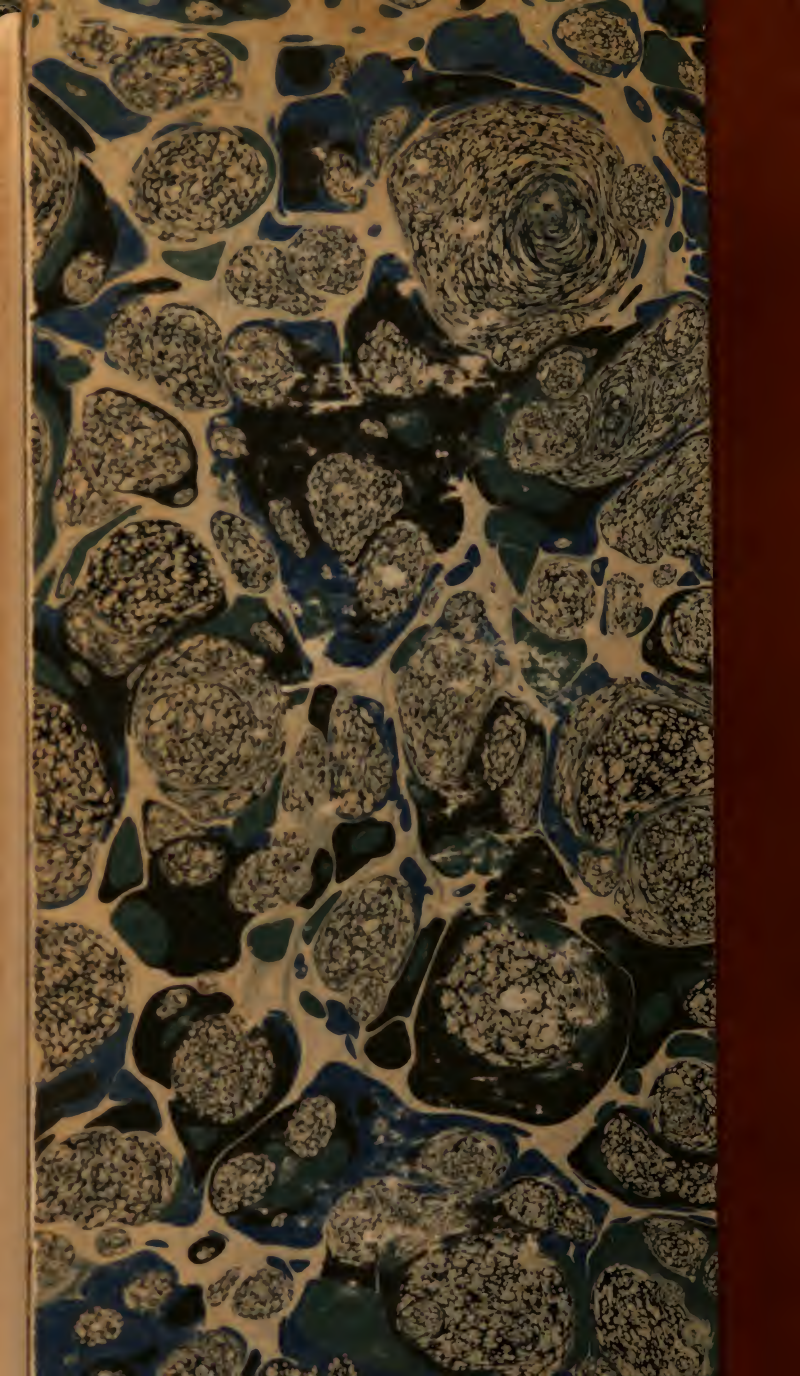
Too many of our young travellers betray the ſymptoms of this diſeaſe. The precipitation with which they hurry from place to place, the ſhortneſs of their ſtay where

where it ought to be of ſome duration, and its length where no reaſons can juſtify it; their little notice of things deſerving much conſideration, and their extraordinary attention to matters of ſmall moment; their neglect of uſeful or agreeable knowledge and information, and their ſhameful preference of unintereſting and trivial ſubjects; theſe and other inſtances of groſs miſconduct, have long contributed to render travelling a buſineſs of great charge and little profit.

I flatter myſelf that your conduct will clear you of theſe imputations. They are the diſgrace of numbers of our countrymen, who ſeem to conſider themſelves as authoriſed by their opulence to act without any regard to rule and method in their proceedings, and to riot in the waſte of time, as if it were as much at their command as money.

With perſons of this character be no further connected than good manners and neceſſity

ceſſity require; their ſociety is peculiarly contagious; in no caſe will evil communication produce its uſual effects with more ſpeed and certainty: many a young gentleman has left England with the faireſt expectations of improving by travel, who has been arreſted in the moſt hopeful career, by falling unluckily into ſuch company.

THE END.

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